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m. F. Buckley Jr. —see page 380

NATIONAL REVIEW

EGO JOURNALISM

Reagan and the ADVERSARY PRESS

Victor Gold

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THE CHICAGO BOYS IN CHILE by John Chamberlain
WHY WE WERE IN VIETNAM by Charles Burton Marshall
PLUS Nika Hazelton, D. Keith Mano, Brian Crozier

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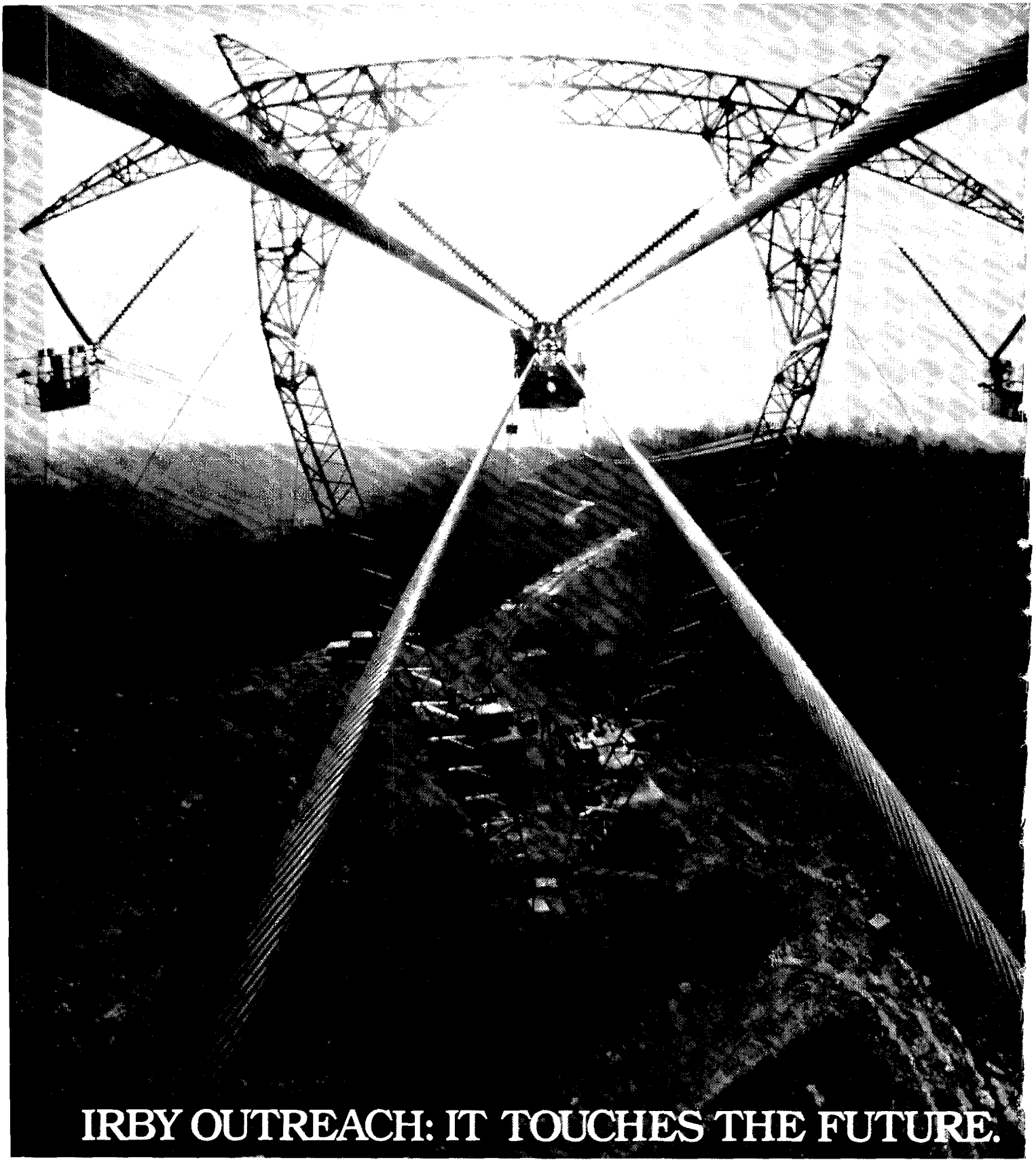

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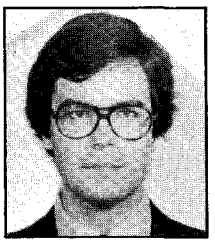

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Victor Gold

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Letters

Politics in El Salvador

John Kurzweil's article "Cry El Salvador" [Mar. 29] has been long awaited. His perspective, both historical and broad, confirms the *Wall Street Journal* and Freedom House in their claims that the press is not doing an adequate job reporting Salvadoran politics. The question is, How can the Reagan Administration create a consensus about its position regarding the Duarte government so that Congress will send the kind of military aid it desperately needs?

Paul Richter
Concord, N.H.

Is There a Soviet Threat?

John Lukacs's article ["Open Your Eyes, for God's Sake," Mar. 5] illustrates the typical case of a historian approaching politics—it is Kennan's case too, and the comparison is not meant to flatter. True, during their colonization of Eastern Europe the Russians inspired and created nothing (except hatred and contempt), but 150 years of Turkish occupation in Hungary left no positive traces either. The Turks too drained the country, reduced it to misery, and used it as a base for further expansion. Meanwhile, the cultural resistance of the subdued populations does not achieve much; the occupation, by Turks or Russians, must be fought.

Agreement with Lukacs: Washington cannot be counted upon in this struggle. On the contrary, U.S. interest, from Roosevelt to Reagan, has been to keep Europe divided, to maintain it as a Russo-American condominium. This deadlock will be broken within a decade by Moscow when it offers reunification to Germany—with America an uncomprehending bystander.

The trouble is, and here I again oppose the author, that Washington, like Lukacs, sees a danger "from the South" (by agrarian reformers, no doubt), not realizing that danger also comes "from the East." Marxism may no longer be respectable in the eyes of intellectuals and historians; it is a brilliant instrument of expansionist policy in the hands of the Kremlin's leaders.

Thomas Molnar
New York, N.Y.

John Lukacs is incisively enlightening, of course, about Eastern Europe and how it got that way.

It would certainly be a much better and more hopeful world if only the conclusions he draws—that containment is needless, stupid, and self-defeating—were clear enough to the rest of us that we could take a chance he is right. The core of his conclusions for American policy seems to be that unless the Russians and their stooges in other lands are burning with a pure bright flame of fanatical conviction in Leninism as the one true faith, they are simply not dangerous any more, and will be hobbled and then destroyed by their incompetence and cultural sterility.

But it has never been so. As Robert Wesson points out in *The Imperial Order*, the military empires which have most greatly menaced systems of diversity and independent states have possessed thuggish, unattractive, decayed ideologies and stagnant economic systems. At the same time, they have possessed efficient military and police forces, and well-oiled, skillful propaganda techniques. They have mindlessly expanded until stopped by force—until they were contained.

Russia is methodically conquering Afghanistan—it is not in a quagmire there. Although the Italian Communist Party seems to be alienated, most Communists, including, for example, the French Communist Party and the Persian Tudeh, are still strong and flexible external assets of the Kremlin. The prospects for Russian military capacity have never been brighter—the U.S. will not try to catch up if it costs real money, and Western Europe gets weaker by the day. Control of Western Europe would mean that Moscow commands more economic resources than does the United States. Can we prudently turn around and walk away for the reasons adduced by Mr. Lukacs?

John W. Bowling
Troy, Ala.

English News

The column by Nika Hazelton, "Oh, to Be in England" [Mar. 5], ignores the brighter side of what's going on there.

On June 27, 1981, the Humber Bridge near Hull was opened. It is the longest suspension bridge in the world. Yet it hardly got any notice at all in our press, including the *New York Times*, which boasts of having all the news that's fit to print.

But more to the point is the salvaging of the cruiser *Edinburgh*. During World War II, the *Edinburgh* was sunk off Murmansk with a load of gold bars. Only a few years ago any salvage attempt to retrieve the treasure seemed hopeless. Then—in 1972, I believe—a widely unnoticed announcement was made that, in the course of North Sea oil exploration, an improvement in technique had been made.

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By now you probably get the idea that, while **The American Spectator** takes delight in being mockingly, irreverently funny, we can also be deadly serious. Especially when the targets of our criticism are the institutions, individuals, and ideas that rank as sacred cows to the more trendily chic liberal media: SALT, OSHA, affirmative action, the joy of economic scarcity, windmills, Barry Commoner, Ralph Nader, Jane Fonda, and all the other peculiar species of fish, fowl, and reptile that environmentalists champion so strenuously on National Public Radio and TV.

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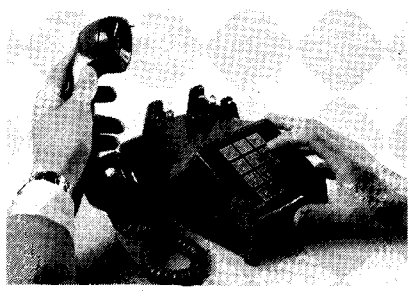

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The salvaging was finally done last October. The weather was bad, but almost all the gold was recovered by British divers in a record salvaging attempt.

Now we turn to the question which remains unanswered: What was the reaction of the American press? Scant attention was paid to this truly remarkable feat.

So in retrospect a purely negative report about England is found wanting

John L. Stryher
Toms River, N.J.

Zip Code Mania

NR should not allow itself to be taken in by bad mathematics even if it is accompanied by a formidable name. Professor Friedman's calculation ["Letters," Feb. 19] of the number of possible nine-digit zip codes to be 999,999,999, although correctly recognizing that a zip code may contain the same digit more than once, is off by one. Given that each digit may range from zero to nine, then there are actually one billion possible nine-digit zip codes, ranging from 000000000 to 999999999. Although "fancy mathematics" can certainly give incorrect answers, common sense is no substitute for correct mathematics. In this case, the applicable formula for the number of mathematically possible *n*-digit zip codes, where each digit may range from zero to nine, is 10^n.

Leonard Levin
Boston, Mass.

That error was an editorial one, not Mr. Friedman's. Our apologies. —LB

Thanks to Our Readers

Thank you for running the piece on Afghanistan ["Afghanistan's Forgotten War," Feb. 5]. Within a week of publication, $5,000 and several hundred encouraging letters, I'm told, arrived at the Afghanistan Relief Committee.

I'm sure the Afghanistan Relief Committee wishes it had more weeks like that. The spontaneous response by your readers speaks well of them, and of NATIONAL REVIEW.

Bruce Chapman
Washington, D.C.

The Uses of Yalta

I cannot accept John P. Roche's conclusion ["The Myth of Yalta," Feb. 19] that FDR thought that he had arranged a compromise with Stalin regarding a coalition of the Polish government-in-exile and the Lublin Committee. FDR may have been "born without an ideological chromosome" and he may have "hated long-range planning," but he could not have been unaware of Stalin's crimes against Poland. Just six months before the Yalta meeting, Radio Moscow had urged the Polish Underground Army in Warsaw to rise up against the Germans as the Red Army

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crossed the Vistula River. Forty thousand men and women of the Underground Army responded to the call. But the Red Army halted its advance; no supplies of any kind were sent to help the Warsaw freedom fighters; and "Uncle Joe" refused to allow British and American planes to land and refuel at Soviet bases—the only way they could have made supply drops over Warsaw. The Underground Army held out for two months against five German divisions, until, inevitably, they were decimated. Only then did the Soviet Army resume its advance on Warsaw. This was a very efficient method of eliminating anti-Communists.

FDR knew that Stalin had broken off all relations with the Polish government-in-exile when it had had the temerity to inquire of the Soviets regarding German reports of a mass grave in the Katyn Forest near Smolensk, where the Russians had thrown the bodies of twenty thousand Polish soldiers whom they had murdered.

FDR knew better than to believe he had worked out a real compromise. What he had arranged was a face-saving device by means of which the West could claim that subsequent events in Poland resulted from internal politics and not from the Soviets' role in the Fourth Partition of Poland. FDR may have been legitimately concerned with other problems, but let us not legitimize the fraud of Yalta by attributing to him thoughts and beliefs about Stalin's intentions that only a moron could have held in good faith.

As an aside, it is interesting to note that one of the young soldiers of the Polish Berlin Brigade of the Red Army who sat on the east bank of the Vistula while their countrymen were fighting to the death in the sewers beneath Warsaw was a fellow named Jaruzelski.

David Farnham
Baltimore, Md.

Erratum

Memo to: Pitts
From: Bill
Re: Comic strip ["Notes & Asides," Feb. 19]

Thanks. But "Motley's Crew" may be miffed at you.

L. S. Hembree
Anderson, S.C.

Pius XI on Capitalism

There is a relevant passage from one of the papal encyclicals which Mr. John Burke does not mention in his article on "The Vatican Verdict on Communist Revolution" [Mar. 5].

In section 16 of Pius XI's encyclical on Atheistic Communism, the Pope says: "If we would explain the blind acceptance by so many thousands of workmen, we must remember that the way had been already prepared for it by the religious and moral destitution in which wage-earners had been left by liberal economics. . . . It can surprise no one that the Communist fallacy should be spreading in a world already to a large extent de-Christianized." The word "liberal" here means *capitalist*. Pius XI is saying that capitalism led working people to Communism, and that capitalism, by destroying religion, facilitated the spread of Communism. Karl Marx also says that capitalism leads working people into Communism, and that capitalist society has destroyed Christianity. For example, in the *Manifesto* he writes, "When Christian ideas succumbed in the eighteenth century to rationalist ideas, feudal society fought its death battle with the then revolutionary bourgeoisie."

Marx, not surprisingly, considers these factors to be a big point in favor of capitalism. Equally unsurprisingly, Pius XI considers them to be a big drawback of capitalism, among other drawbacks that he and other popes have noted.

Michael P. Slattery
Wynnewood, Pa.

Correction

There was an error in the biographical note that accompanied the article by James McClain Jr., "A Day in the Life of the World's Biggest Spender" [Feb. 19]. Mr. McClain is currently employed, not by a television station in Dayton, Ohio as we said in the biographical note, but as marketing director of Videa, Ltd. in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. —KL

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FOR THE RECORD

■ The reason the press hasn't pulled out every last stop in its anti-Administration campaign, says *Christian Science Monitor* columnist **Joseph Harsch**, is that **Reagan** has made "substantial progress" on his two major campaign goals: bringing down inflation and cutting the scope of government. . . . But in many quarters the hue and cry is on. Watch for major demonstrations all over the country on June 12, opening of **UN Special Session on Disarmament**. At New York's Riverside Church Disarmament rally, **Norma Becker** (of Disarmament Committee) called on audience "to organize like we have never done before." **Ramsey Clark** did her one better. He called on U.S. to "become the first nation to unilaterally disarm." (Clark was fresh from trip to Nicaragua where he failed to spot a single Salvadoran rebel being armed or trained.) The two hundred organizations involved in June 12 shindig plan to import several thousand protestors from Europe and Japan. . . . Dr. **Benjamin Spock** is back in the fight with new mass mailing: "We must *stop* him. And we *can* stop him"—Ronald Reagan, that is, for making it "more likely than ever that you and I will die in a nuclear attack." RR's major sin: building the neutron bomb. . . . If you start spotting **purple ribbons** in lapels you will be spotting activists of the "Get the U.S. out of Salvador" bunch. . . . Incidentally, a poll of two hundred students at U. of Nevada on **El Salvador** found that 39 thought it was in Africa (only 37 knew it was in Central America), but a good 177 knew what the fighting is all about: El Salvador, they told the pollsters, is at war with another country.

■ California, meet **Gore Vidal**. He wants to be your new senator and will campaign for drastic cuts in the defense budget, legalization of prostitution, gambling, and drug use, and for taxing the churches. . . . **Tom Hayden** is reported raising three-quarters of a million for his primary campaign for a seat in the California Assembly. Hayden's Campaign for Economic Democracy, financed in part by **Jane Fonda**'s workout exercise salons, is effective on a local level: fifty of its endorsed candidates have been elected. Hayden, incidentally, has come out for sanctions against Poland and the Soviet Union. "The Soviet Union and its Polish puppet [should be held] completely responsible for every drop of blood that stains Polish soil." . . . In Texas, Democratic Sen. **Lloyd Bentsen** will pitch his reelection campaign to moderates, says political consultant **George Christian**. Only 14 per cent of Texans call themselves liberals. . . . And in Massachusetts, Republican hopeful **Ray Shamie** keeps hammering away at **Edward Kennedy** in the **David-Goliath** race of the year.

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"It makes a nice change—the world holding OPEC for ransom."

■ The Reverend **Sun Myung Moon** is ready to take on the *Washington Post*. Mock-ups of his new Washington daily, the *Washington Times*, have been widely distributed through the city. The editor, **James Whelan**, was editor of *Sacramento Union*. . . . There are two new conservative publications on the campuses: **Brown**'s *The Naked Eye*, which describes itself as "an upstart publication" but whose first issues are more sedate than bellwether *Dartmouth Review* (John S. Keating, Editor, Student Activities Office Box 1930, Brown U., Providence, R.I. 02921), and **Princeton**'s new *The Madison Report* (John Goodwin, Publisher, Robert Brooks, Editor, P.O. Box 1347, Princeton, N.J. 18540). . . . In D.C., the **Business Broadcast Forum** is starting to run commentaries by **Arthur Laffer**, **Bruce Herschensohn**, and **Jack Kemp** on WRC radio. . . . National Center for Public Policy Research (413 E. Capitol St., S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003) will distribute free copies of conservative publications. Now available: an issue on **Yellow Rain** and Heritage Foundation Backgrounder on it. . . . **Vladimir Bukovsky**, among others, is setting up a Committee to Free Kabul. Purpose: to buy and smuggle into Afghanistan lightweight radio transmitters, $2,000 each, and pre-recorded tapes. (Radio Free Kabul, c/o Coutts and Co., Old Park Lane, London W.1, England).

■ SEEING IS BELIEVING DEPT.: **I. F. Stone** has named **Barry Goldwater** "Conservative of the Year." Stone says liberals "may have been unjust" to Barry all these years. . . . FTC Chairman **James Miller** has called on Congress to cut back on the FTC's powers. . . . And Kennesaw, Georgia has passed an ordinance requiring the head of every household to own a gun and ammunition. It won't cause more injuries to law-abiding citizens, says Mayor **Darvin Purdy**, but it will put criminals on notice that they'd better watch out.

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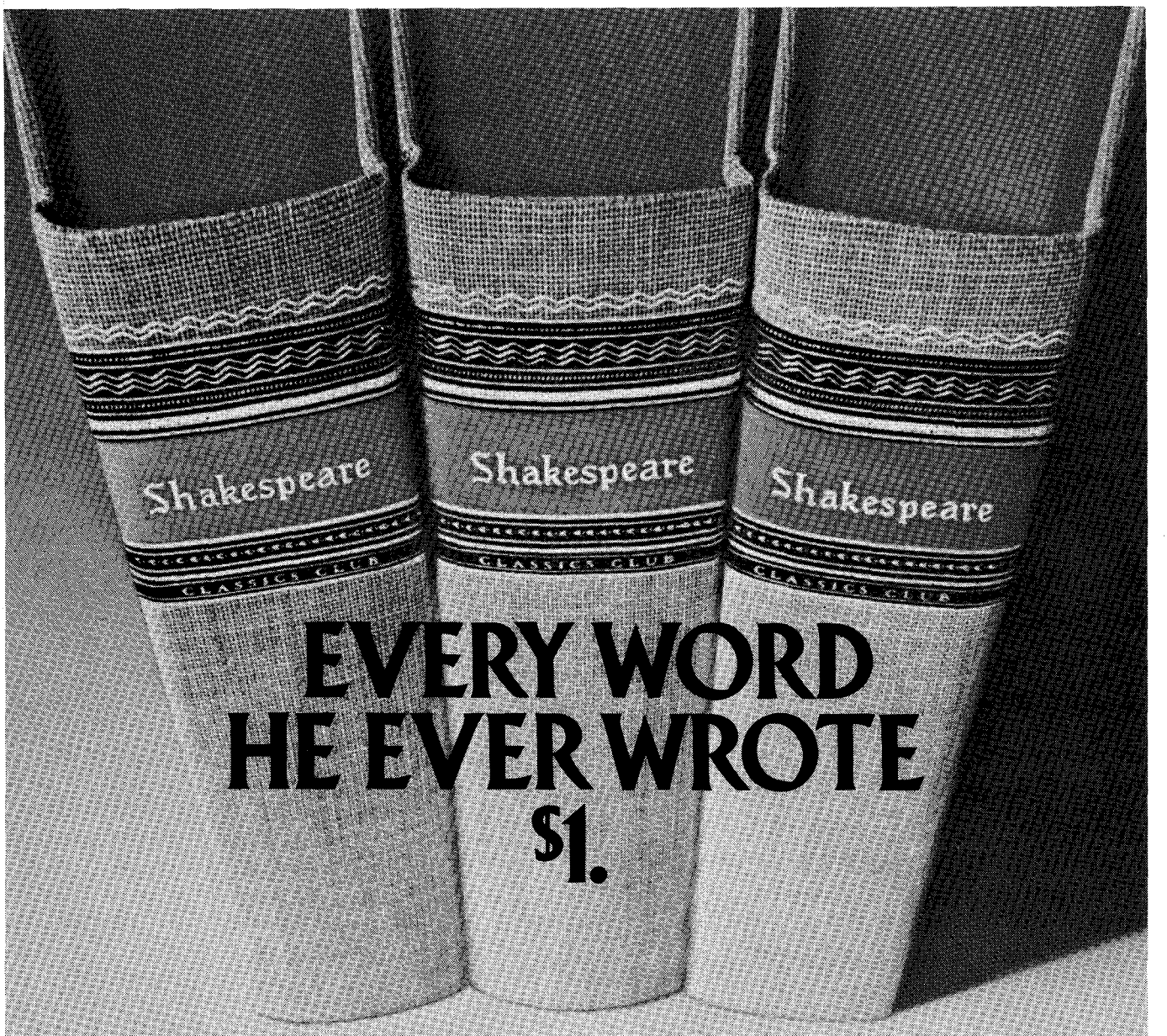

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THE WEEK

■ Okay, those elections in Guatemala and El Salvador are not being run by the League of Women Voters—but they're a lot better than the elections in Nicaragua and Cuba.

■ In the general derision of supply-side economics that followed the Stockman flap late last year, nobody has bothered to explain exactly what's wrong with the supply-side approach. After all, it is common sense—is it not?—that the optimum level of taxation, from the viewpoint of the greediest collector, is somewhat less than 100 per cent. From which it follows that if we are now being taxed *above* that level, the surest road to recovery—*and* to reducing the deficit—is to *lower* the tax rates, *n'est-ce pas?* Are the critics saying, then, that we are still being taxed below the optimum? If so, would they kindly specify how far tax rates should be raised to restore prosperity?

■ Election '82 is becoming as complicated in New York as in California. Take the last fortnight. Bruce Caputo, the front-running Republican in the senatorial race (against Daniel Patrick Moynihan), has picked up his marbles and gone home, his less than truthful account of what he did during the Vietnam War years having come to light. Caputo's departure having left a void, up from the political past popped the aristocratic Whitney North Seymour Jr.—former U.S. Attorney, former state senator representing John Lindsay's, later Edward Koch's soon-to-be gerrymandered swank Silk Stocking district on Manhattan's East Side—the last (but one) remnant of New York's once-powerful Rockefeller liberal network. (The other Rocky holdover is former New York GOP chairman Richard Rosenbaum, about whom more anon.) Seymour is at the starting gate but has yet to get the endorsement of present GOP state chairman George Clark, whose endorsement of gubernatorial candidate Edward Regan backfired last week (about which also more anon). Nor is it likely that Seymour will get the endorsement of either the Conservative or the Right to Life Party if any more palatable candidate turns up. New York's gubernatorial race, meanwhile, was wide open for about a fortnight after Governor Hugh Carey said he wanted out. Then Mayor Ed Koch threw in his blintz, and polls showed him leading all the GOP contenders and Democratic Lieutenant Governor Mario Cuomo, who is busy staking out the left-most position in the contest. On the Republican side, Controller Ned Regan, young, attractive, and conservative, with the backing of Chairman Clark but not of a majority of the GOP county chairmen, led the Republican pack for a while but bowed out a week ago because—it came down to this—he didn't think he could beat Koch. Regan's departure, which was graceful and upbeat—he will run for re-election as Controller—leaves Lew Lehrman, the Conservative Party candidate, as leader in a field of not-so-hopefuls that includes Rockefellerite Rosenbaum.

■ Fifty-two members of the House of Representatives have turned to Washington's Institute for Policy Studies—think-tank for the *Village Voice* crowd—for help in trying to contrive alternatives to Reagan Administration policies. Fifty-one of these are Democrats—including such leadership figures as Peter Rodino (N.J.), Morris Udall (Ariz.), and Henry Reuss (Wis.), chairmen, respectively, of the Judiciary Committee, the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee, and the Joint Economic Committee. Representative Hamilton Fish Jr. (N.Y.) is the sole Republican in the venture. IPS will pick up the tab for the 21 separate studies, due in April. We can hardly wait.

■ Believing the best test of a model is its accuracy in predicting, we checked Professor John Kenneth Galbraith's *New Industrial State* to find an answer to the problems of the auto industry: 40 per cent unemployment, losses of more than $1 billion, sales dropping to World War II levels. It seems, however, that "under the present circumstances, a slippage in automobile sales as a whole sets in motion by all the firms the sales strategy by which it is offset." But doesn't the market dictate that people can refuse to buy Chryslers if they want to? "At the ultimate and decisive point, where the great and important decisions are made on what and how much and at what price things are to be produced, there is assumed to be abdication to the impersonal magic of the market. This is improbable as well as wrong. . . . Consumers exercising their sovereignty would be inconsistent with the company's planning . . . and management of demand." C'mon, Professor, isn't it just possible that people might go out and buy Toyotas? "There is slight danger that

Mr. Reagan Fires Back

Senator Baker was livid;
  Senator Packwood turned mauve;
Peter Domenici bridled;
  Dole was a sizzling stove.
Dishing it out was an upper;
  Taking it, though, was a drag.
Watching the media giggle
  Made their constituents gag.

W. H. VON DREELE

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LETTER FROM WASHINGTON

It looks like the Russians have foxed us again, i.e., diverted international attention from their horror show in Poland to our grim sideshow in Central America. The Mexican handoff by Al Haig helped, too, mesmerizing the media as only Haig can. The city is a-dither trying to figure out what is going on.

The first possible explanation is that the Mexican caper is exactly what the Secretary of State says it is, the assignment of minimum authority to the Mexicans to knock on several doors and see which ones open.

The second interpretation has it that the Mexican involvement is a temporary stratagem to pacify the domestic political opposition, public and congressional, buy time and maneuverability, turn the heat down until after the November elections, quiet our allies, move the news story of the bogus Nicaraguan defector off page one (that worked in spades, Al), and protect us against a bad fallout from the March 28 elections in El Salvador. Read this as a damage control effort by the Administration, then, and an attempt to create a no-lose situation.

The third possibility, and the worrisome one, is that the Mexican connection is a permanent handoff. Let the Mexicans get the ball rolling in the two demarcated areas, U.S.-Cuba and U.S.-Nicaragua relations, with the understanding that once momentum gathers, it will build naturally and carry public acceptance with it, making it possible to substitute "negotiations" in El Salvador for the political process, and in so doing pop the hot potato permanently from our lap. No one knows what the Administration's real intent is (not even the Administration), but many think it is the last mentioned.

Conservatives are worried because they perceive Haig as coming too much under the influence of European leaders, Schmidt in particular, and thus tending to look upon Central America through a European lens. Their second worry, a worse one, targets on Mexican Foreign Minister Jorge Castañeda, whose Left orientation is known, but not yet completely known.

So, the unstated conservative strategy is: Keep your powder dry. Watch where the Mexicans go with this lateral from Haig, notably whether they travel off limits, i.e., into the Salvadoran arena. If Haig and Castañeda try to substitute negotiations for the political process in El Salvador, the Right in Washington will strike with full force.

■ With Central American news dominating the Washington psyche, a study appearing in the current *Washington Journalism Review* takes on special importance. Shirley Christian of the *Miami Herald* won a Pulitzer Prize last year for her coverage of El Salvador, and at the *WJR*'s request she analyzed the coverage of that nation from January 1, 1978 to July 21, 1979 by the *Washington Post* (244 stories), the *New York Times* (239 stories), and CBS-TV (156 broadcasts). The question Mrs. Christian put to herself was this: "Did American newspaper and television reporters, in their acknowledged enthusiasm for ridding Central America of Somoza, misrepresent the Sandinistas to the American public . . . ?" Her answer? Pretty much "Yes."

■ Washington has only one indigenous newspaper, the *Post*. Baltimore is only some thirty miles down the pike, however, so we also get the *Sun*, which sometimes must clean up after the *Post*'s derelictions, as happened on March 13, the day after the 19-year-old Nicaraguan nondefector did his gig at the State Department. The *Post* assigned 47 inches to that story and none to the testimony of Assistant Secretary of State Tom Enders, who told a congressional committee on the same day that Cuba had been using a Colombian narcotics ring to smuggle arms and money to Communist guerrillas in that country. Enders charged that Cuba was permitting ships carrying marijuana to take sanctuary in Cuban waters while awaiting feeder boats from the Bahamas and Florida. In return, the Colombian ships carried arms and money from Cuba to Colombian guerrillas. The *Sun* carried both stories, and the Enders one more prominently.

■ Father Robert F. Drinan, the far-out, far-Left Jesuit and former congressman from Massachusetts, whom Pope John Paul told to quit political office, now heads Americans for Democratic Action. His current fundraising letter urges recipients to contribute to the ADA so that it can rise up as one in its fight against the fascist oppression of Ronald Reagan. Among the assorted injustices and malefactions perpetrated by the Reagan Administration Drinan includes the charge that the Administration wishes actively to promote, among American youth, the condition of (watch out) *chastity*—an allusion to the Reagan Administration's change in Family Planning regs (Title X) whereby those administering prescription drugs or devices to youngsters must tell parents within ten days. Drinan has every reason to fear. Chastity today, Father, celibacy tomorrow. —CATO

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enough people will ever assert their individuality to impair the management of mass behavior." Ah, but safe within his circle Professor Galbraith warns us that, "I would be the first to admit that the model does not always work. Companies can fail." Still, Professor Galbraith spends the better part of his book expatiating on the manipulatory skills of Chrysler, Ford, and GM. So the question is, if the model does not always work, then when does it?

■ THE ETHICS OF RHETORIC. The President quipped that some of his critics are "sob sisters," which moved Roger Wilkins of CBS Radio's *Spectrum* to complain that Reagan is "debasing the public debate by name-calling." A sampling of Wilkins's recent remarks about the President and his aides: "profoundly racist . . . a klutz . . . the politics of indecency . . . stupid, lawless bigots . . . waging war on the poor . . . hypocrisy and moral squalor . . . he beats up on the helpless . . . he's nasty and there's no compassion or decency in his proposals."

■ Lovable Ed Asner, president of the Screen Actors Guild, calls his predecessor Charlton Heston a "scumbag." We feel sure he only means that Heston is lacking in compassion. Liberal shorthand, you know.

■ Fidel Castro to the Tenth Congress of the World

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Federation of Trade Unions in Havana on February 10, on the reaction of the U.S. Government to the "unfortunate events in Poland": "That same government —whose hands are tainted by the blood of tens of thousands of workers and peasants, foully murdered by the genocidal regimes in El Salvador and Guatemala; which sponsors plans of aggression against Nicaragua and Grenada; which keeps up a hysterical campaign of threats and provocations against the Cuban people, while tightening even more the criminal and total economic blockade imposed for more than twenty years against our country; which backs Israeli massacres against Palestinians and Lebanese; which is a bosom friend of South Africa, where twenty million Africans are discriminated against, exploited, and brutally oppressed; which is an accomplice of all reactionary tyrannies, fascist or racist regimes on earth—that government can never be the defender of the workers' interests in any part of the world." Guess that puts it in perspective!

■ Exciting reading is promised in the new *Southern Partisan*, a good-looking magazine now being published in Columbia, South Carolina. An early issue brought to light an unpublished work by Richard Weaver. The next issue will feature a piece by Otto Scott on the heresy of the New England transcendentalists and the wicked effect it had on American political thought, a short piece on the pagan appeal of Carl Sagan, and an interview with Jerry Falwell, asking tough questions on whether right-wing social Christianity is nothing better than the mirror image of the Social Gospel. Contributors to the magazine include Andrew Lytle, F. R. Buckley, Russell Kirk. (Address: P. O. Box 11708, Columbia, S.C. 29211).

■ The Federalist Society, a group of conservatively inclined law students, with chapters at Yale, Columbia, and Chicago, will be sponsoring a symposium on "The New Federalism: Legal and Political Ramifications." (No, Dan, it's not that your show doesn't do the job; it's just that we already know what *you* think.) Time: April 23-25. Place: Yale Law School. Speaking: Judge Robert Bork, D.C. Circuit; Judge Richard Posner, 7th Circuit; Judge Ralph Winter, 2nd Circuit; Walter Berns; Antonin Scalia, editor of *Regulation* magazine; and many more. Anyone interested (most especially including law students) should write The Federalist Society, 401A Yale Station, New Haven, Connecticut 06520.

■ The Social Security Administration has found a way to send out $20 million worth of checks each year that are not cashed, and we don't even want to think about how they do it.

■ Ed Asner's saying all those things about El Salvador? Sounds more like Ted Baxter. "Aw, Lou, of course I know where it is—right next to Puerto Rica and Costa Rico."

■ Senator Harrison Williams has been promoted.

The Trains Run on Time, Too

David Rockefeller's team
Likes Angola's Red regime,
Pointing out to right-wing cranks
That they've never bothered banks.

W. H. VON DREELE

The Nuclear (Last) Strike

It will be very important for the Reagan Administration to handle correctly the nuclear-freeze movement now shaping up as this spring's mass effort, and for it to be handled correctly its *politics* must be thoroughly understood.

The nuclear-freeze movement represents a *political* initiative. It arises out of the political *successes* Reagan has so far achieved. It has nothing whatever to do with the relative strengths of current U.S. and Soviet strategic forces or with this or that weapons system. Correctly perceived, the nuclear-freeze movement represents political desperation; it has attracted the support of most of the defeated political figures of the past generation; but, on that very account, it should be handled with a political response.

Reagan has thrown the Left onto the defensive on every contested political front. Reagan has set the political agenda. He has a national consensus behind him on reducing the federal domestic role. The debate now concerns not whether it should be reduced but where and by how much. The liberal social agenda has been thrown on the defensive: ERA, busing, abortion, school prayer, gay rights—you name it. No politician today could survive giving an LBJ-style speech on the need for reverse discrimination. Today, the major black spokesmen are talking only to each other, while big labor is cooperating with management in order to remain competitive with the Japanese. The Democratic Party itself is split several ways, much of it voting with Reagan on various issues.

To make matters still worse, many of the key economic indicators are turning very favorable. The liberal political situation is desperate.

In this political Alamo what does liberalism *do?* It comes out against . . . *death.* No doubt, there's still a majority to be had *there.*

And that is precisely why the Reagan Administration should not get on the wrong side of the issue. This liberal political gambit, important to notice,

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has a decisive political weakness: on down the line, when the cards begin to be played, the liberal position depends for its validation on the behavior of the Soviet Union.

Make no mistake about it, the nuclear-freeze movement is gaining political momentum. As soon as good weather arrives, we can expect to see large-scale demonstrations in Washington, backed up by the national media. All of this will be given local resonance around the country by the universities and the churches, the same jolly folk who helped to give us the "boat people." Already, this movement has attracted the fading political stars of yesterday. Senator Kennedy speaks in apocalyptic tones: "Today the arms race rushes ahead toward nuclear confrontation that could well mean the annihilation of the human race." And the nuclear-freeze movement has enlisted the support of people who have not had any recent purchase upon the direction of American politics: Walter Mondale, Father Theodore Hesburgh, Senator Mark Hatfield, the Reverend Billy Graham. They hope to lead an emotional, apocalyptic movement around which liberalism and the Democratic Party can rise again.

But they have a problem.

The only politically acceptable American formulation calls for a "mutual" freeze on nuclear weapons and delivery systems. Worse still, it calls for a "verifiable" freeze. If the anti-nuclear movement called for a *unilateral* freeze, it would soon cease to be a movement; it would be reduced to its core of the usual people.

President Reagan has already shown how to defang movements of this sort politically with his call for an elimination of all medium-range nuclear weapons from Europe. The Soviets disappeared into a squid-like ink of technicalities.

However, in the politics of the various moves and counter-moves, the Administration will have to learn to deal with things like Brezhnev's latest "freeze" on medium-range missiles in the European arena. If allowed a free ride, the Soviets will play the nuclear issue like an ocarina. *Of course* the Soviets have now completed their SS-20 deployment program, and so a freeze is meaningless. *Of course* the SS-20 is a mobile missile and can be redeployed anywhere on short notice. *Of course* the SS-20 can be fired from positions east of the Urals and still hit Western Europe. And it is well to point all of this out. But, today, the politics of the nuclear issue requires, always, an emphasis on positive counter-proposals—such as Reagan's earlier offer not to deploy the Pershing in return for Soviet *removal* of the SS-20. In politics, as Mr. Reagan well knows, the music counts for a great deal, sometimes more than the words themselves.

In this way, Reagan can dissolve the new "mass movement" by the simple tactic of agreeing with its overt proposals. Yes, of course, we desire a "mutual" and "verifiable" reduction of nuclear arms.

Then, from the Soviet side, we wait for the mutuality and the verifiability; though not holding our breath.

Politically, that would shatter the nuclear-freeze movement now building up as a liberal *pis-aller*.

Blushes, Anyone?

When 19-year-old Orlando José Tardencillas Espinosa pulled a fast one at his press conference and swore he was the only foreign soldier who had ever set foot in El Salvador, the *Washington Post* carried a front-page gloat that the State Department had run up against a "credibility" gap. The *Post*'s editorial page editor, Meg Greenfield, was meanwhile making the pointed observation that "a Presidency that fails to win the fight that [Reagan's] is now facing on the larger question of credibility can be ruined."

On the face of it, the *Post* has its own credibility problems. Its sob-sister reportage, exemplified by Janet Cooke's "Jimmy" story, is designed to preserve New Class interests. Its coverage of Central America portrays Communist rebels through what Shirley Christian (a Pulitzer Prize-winning correspondent for the *Miami Herald*) calls "a romantic haze"—typified by front-page stories with headlines like "Sandinistas Disclaim Marxism."

Yet through some weird epistemological warp, the *Post* and its media sisters use "credibility" as their very own club—or perhaps as a sort of honorific term they may bestow or retract according as they are pleased or displeased by an Administration's policies.

Miss Greenfield explains that "credibility" is "a concept that has less to do with the accuracy of a press conference statement or a subordinate's testimony than with the man's overall authority and plausibility." Translation: We can overlook the little gaffes, Ronnie, if you play ball with us.

True, setting up a press conference around Tardencillas was a gaffe. But Tardencillas's transparent lies hardly enhanced the press line on El Salvador with which they rhymed so prettily. They should have made the *Post* blush, not smirk.

El Salvador: Mini-Vietnam?

In most visible respects, the fighting in El Salvador bears little resemblance to the Vietnam War. Quantitatively, the differences are immense. El Salvador is about the size of Massachusetts. The guerrillas number some five thousand, pretty minor stuff, whereas the Saigon forces faced, in the NVA, one of the best regular armies in the world. Even the vastly beefed-up Nicaraguan military bears little resemblance to that.

Though all this is true, some ominous analogies and parallels do trouble our reflections.

1. As in Vietnam, the external connections of the

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guerrilla movement give it a permanent guarantee against final defeat. In the last resort, the Communist guerrillas can simply fade away into Nicaragua and hold themselves in readiness to return and fight another day. It is even conceivable that the guerrillas could set up a government-in-exile which would attract international support.

2. Thus, the guerrillas need not *win*, need not occupy the capital and take over the seat of government. Nor is it likely that the overall plan calls for them to do so. Like the Vietcong, their mission is merely to wreck the existing social and economic arrangements.

3. In El Salvador, as in Vietnam, the U.S. approach has been reactive and incremental. In the Dominican Republic, the last successful U.S. intervention, President Johnson moved with overwhelming force to assert the U.S. interest. To guarantee an insurgency the privilege of operating in a surprise-free environment is to guarantee one's own defeat.

4. In El Salvador, as in Vietnam, we are allowing the enemy to control the dimension of time, an enormous political and psychological advantage.

5. Perhaps most important of all, this Administration—exactly like the ones that presided over the Vietnam War—has not laid the political groundwork for a serious assertion of the U.S. interest. The American public has no clear conception of that interest as it applies to Central America. It is unlikely that public opinion, properly informed, would be prepared to tolerate in Central America a branch of the Soviet empire run through Havana. No serious moves are possible, however, without building a solid base of domestic support; particularly since serious moves are very likely to be traumatic.

Opinion and Reality

The Reagan economic program, so it seems, is doing badly in the polls. A February Gallup survey shows 38 per cent of the public approving of the President's handling of the economy, while 53 per cent disapproves. Harris shows a 39 to 59 split. The CBS/*New York Times* poll is more evenly divided, but still tips against Reaganomics, 42 to 48. There is one small comfort for Administration advisors: according to Harris and the NBC/AP poll, support for Reagan economics stopped losing ground around the end of last year and has remained steady or recovered slightly since then.

Some liberals must be ready to jubilate at the seeming unpopularity of the President's program. They should restrain themselves. Something very strange is going on beneath the surface of these polls.

Gallup and Harris also ask their respondents about President Reagan's handling of inflation—and, incredibly enough, his ratings on that issue have been running even lower than his overall economic ratings. Harris shows the public 37 to 62 per cent negative on Reagan's record in "getting inflation under control" as of February 12-17. Gallup has them disapproving by 37 to 53 per cent. This is no momentary fluke, either: throughout last year, Reagan's inflation ratings tended to be a few points lower than his overall economic ratings.

If you judged the success of an economic policy by its standing in the polls—if, that is, you behaved like a typical congressman—you would have to think inflation was getting worse and worse. In fact, as even congressmen must know, it is shaping up as one of the great successes of this Administration. From a peak of 15 per cent early in 1980, and 12 per cent when Reagan took office, it has fallen to less than 8 per cent in the past year, and much less than that in recent months. Producer prices, which are thought to foreshadow coming trends, actually went down in February. Prices of industrial materials have dropped by no less than 16 per cent in the past year. The price of gold, that Rorschach blot of "inflation psychology," has been cut in half since September 1980. Other erstwhile inflation hedges like real estate and collectibles are down too. So is oil.

It is often said that inflation is slowing down merely because of the recession, and will pick up again when the economy does. That theory is not very convincing. Since Reagan took office, unemployment has gone up by one and a half points while inflation has been cut nearly in half. At no time in the past three decades has inflation been cut so much at so small a cost in added unemployment.

Perhaps the economic-policy polls measure what people think they *should* believe, what they have been told to believe, about Reagan's policies. Or perhaps a great many people are so dependent on inflation, being locked into high-interest mortgages and the like, that they are consciously or unconsciously discontented with anti-inflation policies. Whatever the reason, the economic polls are virtually meaningless as a guide to real public sentiment or upcoming political trends, let alone to good policy. A much more valuable test of opinion, according to Karlyn Keene of *Public Opinion*

Secret No Longer

Five hundred commandos are training
(All Latins, the story insists)
To worry the folks in Managua
Who render salutes with their fists.
Once, this was a CIA secret—
Perhaps more important than most.
So if you enjoyed the reporting,
Please credit the *Washington Post*.

W. H. VON DREELE

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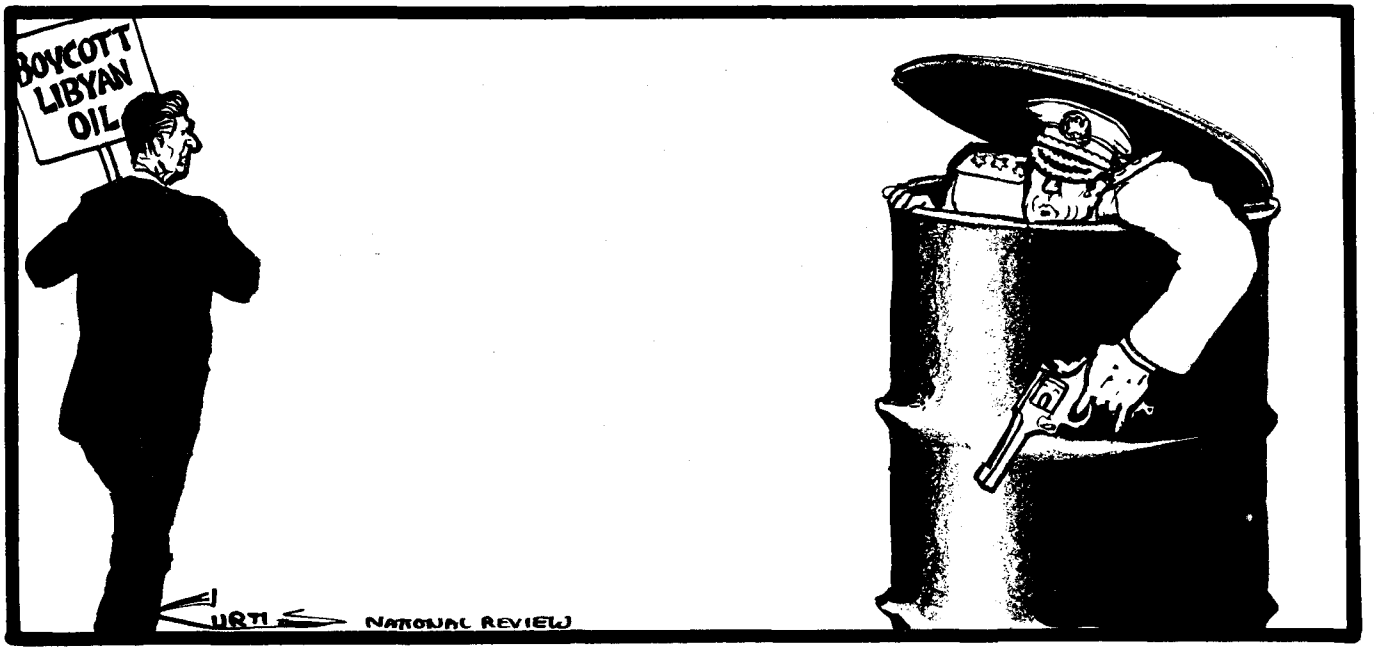

magazine, are the presidential "trial heats," where voters are faced with a clear alternative to the policy in question. Here, the signs are good. Last November, just as support for Reaganomics reached a low point, Gallup matched up President Reagan in trial heats with Carter, Kennedy, and Mondale. Reagan won easily, 54 to 35, 56 to 35, and 54 to 37. Voters may not have figured out the Republicans, but they remember the Democrats all too well.

Torpedo the Damns, Full Speed Ahead

Republican lawmakers, forgathered on Maryland's Eastern Shore for their annual Tidewater Conference, spent a good deal of time brooding over the black vote. There was much for them to brood about. A heavy black turnout last year helped elect LBJ's son-in-law Charles Robb, a Democrat, governor of Virginia. The Administration's handling of private-school tax exemptions generated reams of bad copy, and coming struggles over an amended Voting Rights Act or an anti-busing amendment will generate reams more. Conservatives and mugwumps alike shared in the gloom. Senator Robert Packwood had been grumping, before the conference convened, about the GOP's neglect of women and minorities, but the resolution the conference finally passed—pledging to "maintain . . . assistance to those in short-term need as we encourage their upward mobility"—was sponsored by Representative Mickey Edwards, chairman of the American Conservative Union.

The problem is deep, and probably not susceptible to resolutions. Over the years the black voter has been encouraged to think of himself as the ward of the state and the debtor of the liberal wing of the Democratic Party. Some of the efforts made on his behalf have indeed benefited him (e.g., the original Voting Rights Act); others have been disastrous (see George Gilder on welfare, *passim*). There are blacks who recognize that a conservative economic plan, effectively implemented, would benefit them now, and President Reagan has bid for their support. But habits die hard, and he has not gotten, and probably did not expect, a black-GOP love feast.

One issue on which the Republicans might pick up some black support is crime. The prospect of a mugging concentrates the mind wonderfully, and inner-city dwellers tend to be extraordinarily clear-headed on this matter. Apart from that, though, the Republicans will have to play the hand they've been dealt. To the extent that blacks are disproportionately poor, they will be most helped by a producing economy; and Reaganomics is still the only fresh idea in town. If the GOP economic plan succeeds, Republicans will not need to agonize over any one voting bloc.

Goldwater's Constitution

Senator Barry Goldwater will go down in the history books for the pivotal role he played in twentieth century American politics. His 1964 presidential candidacy crystallized changes that had long been brewing in both major parties, shifting the Republican center of gravity South and West, and prying the formerly "solid South" loose from the Democratic coalition. Not only did Goldwater play a historic role; he remains a beloved figure to conservatives of every variety.

Lately, however, Mr. Goldwater has been talking a certain amount of nonsense. He opposed, for example, the Senate's recent effort to restrict the power of the federal courts to impose racial busing beyond five miles or 15 minutes from a child's home. Goldwater

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based his opposition on the theory that the courts ought to be independent of the legislature, i.e., on the recognized principle of the separation of powers. As he put it, "How long before someone says that the courts can't hand down decisions on drunk driving, or rape, or murder?"

Goldwater, however, has hold of only a half-truth here. We do indeed operate under a separation of powers, but also under a system of checks and balances. When one of the three branches goes too far, the others are supposed to correct the balance.

That, indeed, was precisely what the Senate was attempting to do on the issue of busing. How long, indeed, has it taken for the legislature to act on this issue—a length of time signifying extreme reluctance, a length of time in itself a guarantee against the "rape or murder" examples Senator Goldwater adduces.

The Senate was not attempting to usurp the judicial function. It was moving, at very long last, to correct a generation or more of judicial usurpation of the legislative function. In this, surely, the Senate deserved the support of the conscience of a conservative.

Back to You, Warren

The Senate Judiciary Committee has approved the Human Life Amendment (HLA), which would, in the accurately rococo phrase of the *Washington Post*, "amend the Constitution in order to erase the constitutional right to have an abortion established by the Supreme Court nine years ago." How the Court "establishes" constitutional rights (presumably the Constitution establishes them) has never been explained; but the confusion points up a defect in the HLA approach.

The Constitution should not have to be amended every time the Supreme Court botches one. And in fact the Court is selective in its botching: it countermands state and local lawmakers freely, but it seldom finds constitutional flaws in the handiwork of Congress—which, be it noticed, holds the powers of purse and impeachment, and can revoke the Court's jurisdiction in specific cases. Hence it is relevant to note that the Court boldly struck down the laws of fifty states in *Roe* v. *Wade*, but prudently ducked a fight with Congress over the Hyde Amendment.

The Court, in other words, has taken its liberties by the sufferance of Congress, and with the tacit consent of the many liberals who have dominated Congress over recent decades. It has done the dirty work of the liberal agenda in the areas of abortion, school prayer, pornography, and criminals' rights, for instance, areas the politicians usually prefer to avoid. There was a gentlemen's agreement to excuse the Court's vagaries in these areas as constitutional "interpretation," as long as they didn't step on Congress's toes.

The Human Life *Bill*, on the other hand, now pending in the Senate, amounts to a legislative attempt to defend the Constitution against the Court without pursuing the laborious amending route. Liberals are already calling it "unconstitutional." Whether the Court would dare do so is, however, another matter.

High Frontier

Early March was not kind to U.S. space efforts. On March 5 the Russians landed their second craft in a week on Venus and announced plans for five future missions. The same day produced a report from the American Astronomical Society on the Reagan Administration's cutbacks: they will cut off the U.S. craft now orbiting Venus, cancel the Venus Orbiting Image Radar, shut down Pioneer 10 and Pioneer 11. In all, the Administration budget envisions cutting planetary research by half, mission operations by two-thirds, and military components slightly, unless cheaper technologies can be developed.

The diminished space effort may seriously threaten national security. Recently released Pentagon documents show that the Soviets plan a major thrust into space within the next decade. Next year, the House Armed Services Committee was told, the Soviets will begin deployment of satellite lasers with capabilities far beyond those our intelligence agencies previously supposed possible. Conceivably, Soviet killer satellites not only will threaten our nuclear warning systems and airborne satellites, but will be able to intervene in conventional conflicts.

While all these signs were popping up, the Heritage Foundation was finishing work on an important study, "High Frontier." It fits the new space and laser technologies into a military strategy. Using the space shuttle to construct and maintain the system, says General Daniel Graham, director of the study and former chief of the Defense Intelligence Agency, the U.S. could deploy a network of 432 satellites to protect both our second-strike capability and our own other satellites. The killer satellites could also repel a Soviet first strike by destroying Russian missiles as they arc off the pad. The price tag: $50 billion, not much in relative terms, or from the perspective of a weapons revolution.

Remember the Gas Lines!

OPEC has made the acquaintance of hard times. Prices of oil on the spot market are as much as $6 below OPEC's $34 base price—and could well continue downward, to as little as $5 a barrel, according to MIT economist Morris Adelman. Now is the ideal time, it has been suggested, to take steps to ensure

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that OPEC is never again able to dictate the price of oil as it did in the Seventies. Of all the proposals, the one that has generated the most support is the call for a tariff on imported oil.

In a study by the American Energy Institute, "The Oil Import Tariff: A Painless Way to Balance the Budget," energy analyst David Snow and three co-authors argue persuasively for a tariff. According to their analysis, a tariff of $5 a barrel on imported oil would have numerous benefits. 1) It would restimulate our economy and guarantee more vigorous economic growth by shifting demand toward cheaper and underutilized domestic fuels. 2) A $5 tariff would raise $24 billion for the federal budget, lopping a considerable chunk out of the federal deficit. 3) The tariff would promote further exploitation of domestic oil and gas sources. And 4) the tariff would revitalize our underutilized electric utility system and thus stimulate production of natural gas, coal, and uranium. One might add that the tariff would encourage the continued use of gas-efficient small cars, to which Detroit is now committed, and upon which conservation substantially depends.

Though the tariff has its opponents, primarily among those who fear what effect it would have on the Administration's battle against inflation and interest rates, at the least it is a tempting proposition. As Council of Economic Advisors Chairman Murray Weidenbaum says, "If we do it, now is the time."

Exit Williams, Enter . . . ?

Harrison Williams faced two possibilities at the hands of his Senate colleagues. They could censure him, or they could expel him. Williams preferred the former; when it became apparent that his colleagues preferred the latter, the New Jersey Democrat resigned his seat. "I did not want the Senate," he declared, "to bring dishonor to itself by expelling me." On this statesmanlike note ended the political career of a man found guilty of nine counts of bribery and conspiracy in the Abscam sting. Next question: Whom will Governor Thomas Kean appoint to fill the vacancy?

New Jersey political types say Kean, a Republican, has two choices. He can proceed cautiously by selecting a caretaker who will fill the months remaining in Williams's term and promise not to enter the election campaign. Or he can live dangerously by selecting one of the two Republicans who have already declared for Williams's seat, Representative Millicent Fenwick or supply-sider Jeffrey Bell.

Although Kean is probably more ideologically compatible with Mrs. Fenwick, that's where the compatibility ends. In 1974 she beat Kean by around one hundred votes in a bitterly fought race for Congress. In 1977, when Kean ran for governor, Mrs. Fenwick campaigned for his opponent. Finally, in 1981, she refused to endorse Kean in his successful bid for the governorship.

Bell, for his part, endorsed Kean early in 1981, and, when candidate Kean unveiled his plan to cut taxes, guess who was at his side? Jeffrey Bell.

Given the twists and turns of politics, none of this may mean anything. Governor Kean will make his own calculations. But Bell continues to address himself in specific terms to the tough economic choices; and, still a young man, he is clearly part of the Republican senatorial future in New Jersey.

Ayn Rand, R I P

For the obituary on Ayn Rand, who died March 6 at the age of 77, see page 380.

Notes & Asides

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

Alphabetical fascination does not afflict Mr. Luker [Feb. 19] alone. Alas, I too am infected.

Hence, a tribute:

Academician Buckley countered Democratic expletives, feuding graciously, hilariously immolating jargon-knitting liberal magniloquence. "No obfuscation?" piquantly queried REVIEW. "Stultifying trendiness! Undiscriminating volubility will X yammering zealots."

Sincerely,
Christina L. Rizzo
Baltimore, Md.

Dear Mr. Buckley:

In regard: Your reply to Mr. Luker.

Sorry you had to skip G thru X. The following was done in 16 minutes and X was the only reference needed.

"All boats can deliver extra fine goods here if Japan Korea look more now on production quota restraints set to undercut various world xenophobia yankee zones."

Also, it almost makes sense. Move over.

R. G. Stigler
Kettering, Ohio

Nice going! WFB

Memo to: WFB
From: Timothy Wheeler

In re: John Luker's challenge: "A botanist carefully,

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deliberately, enunciated flowers: 'gardenia, hollyhock, iris, jonquil . . .' " (you finish it). Working time, about thirty seconds.

How about composing a politically pertinent pangram, i.e., a phrase that uses all the letters, in any order? The best-known example is, "The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog." The challenge with pangrams used to be finding the shortest one possible. That one has been solved, with 28- or 29-letter specimens employing such words as "wafq" and "cwms" and making no sense at all. Composers nowadays look for wit and clarity, and a message if you wish.

Martin Gardner mentions this one, about a Roman officer's assessment of the natives in Norway:

"XV quick nymphs beg fjord waltz."

Not quite legitimate, but only 26 letters! Here's one by Clement Wood:

"TV quiz drag nymphs blew Cox, JFK."

A couple of my favorites were spun out by a computer:

"The qualmish Afghan Jew packed over sixty fez with bees."

"When waxing parquet decks, Suez sailors vomit jauntily abaft."

If that one doesn't get you scribbling, here's yet one more version of alphabet games. Find the shortest specimen of your own writing—or of any in *NR*—that contains all the letters in order. (You can assign it to the research crew.) Howard Bergerson, the great wordsmith, calls such a "panalphabetic window," and cites an 88-line chunk of Gray's *Elegy* as the shortest one he has found in literature. He mentions that there is no window in "The Raven," "The Deacon's Masterpiece," or "Il Penseroso." But I'll bet one could find a respectable example in *Marco Polo, If You Can.* Maybe some of *NR*'s readers would like to try.

"Tonight we're going to hear from Ms. Mame Duffy about what the cutbacks in food stamps, school lunches, and Aid to Families with Dependent Children mean to her."

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

I have just finished the fourth chapter of P. T. Bauer's latest work, and have noticed that as it is mid-afternoon, the pubs will be closed due to yet another example of British restrictive government. Since my second favorite recreational activity is therefore denied me, I thought this might be a good time to quill you with an interesting story and an urgent plea.

My name is John Woodward, and presently I am a postgraduate student at the London School of Economics and Political Science. It was during my undergraduate years at the Wharton School (an urban institution highly recognized for its ability to impart semi-vocational skills) that I became an avid reader of *NR.*

One of the first academic acts I undertook upon my arrival in London was to visit the British Library of Economics and Political Science (i.e., the LSE library) and search the periodicals section for the latest copy of *NR.* Alas, the only *NR* I discovered was *The New Republic*! (And the experts wonder why this country is on the proverbial skids.)

In fact, after numerous consultations with the authorities, I learned that the LSE does not receive NATIONAL REVIEW. At first I thought this was a Bennite plot with subversive overtures from Moscow, or perhaps a Labor legacy of Shirley "SDP" Williams's tenure at the Ministry of Education. I admit I shall have to explore these ideas further.

However, Mr. Buckley, one inescapable fact remains. We, the champions of competitive capitalism at the LSE, need your magazine! And like the ancient Israelites, we are hoping you will play God and miraculously supply us with our intellectual manna. Come on, Mr. Buckley, be a sport. Use your influence and get Rusher to donate a subscription of NATIONAL REVIEW to the LSE. Perhaps you can dedicate the subscription to the teachings of F. A. Hayek or something cute like that.

If the collectivist clutches of the government bureaucracy won't finance a subscription, I am depending on good old private enterprise to come through!

Thank you for your assistance in this matter. I look forward to your reply.

Supporting our President and
sincerely yours,
John D. Woodward Jr.
London, England

P.S.: *Q:* What is the biggest country in the world?
A: Estonia. Her border is the Baltic, her capital is Moscow, and her population is in Siberia.

Dear Mr. Woodward: Subscription entered. Good luck. **—WFB**

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ONCE UPON A TIME, long, long ago, we had what we thought was a very good idea, which was: Why not ask our own readers to help us find *new* readers. Heavens no! said wiser heads than ours (we were very new at this kind of thing), that's just plain asking too much of *anybody*. Oho, we answered, but our readers *aren't* just anybody, and we can't broadcast invitations like mass-circulation magazines and take on anyone who answers. No, the people we must look for are people very much like the readers we already have—people with similar ideas and outlook, tastes and values—the very ones, it seems logical to assume, who are much better known to *you* than to us, because they are your friends and relations and business associates, etc. And Lo these many years we have asked our readers to do us this favor: to rrriiippp out a postcard (just like the one facing this page) and use it to introduce some worthy friend to NR—give it to him with your recommendation, or use it to send an introductory gift subscription. And you have: thousands of you have done this simple but invaluable favor for us (some of you many, many times!). Without that kind of help from you, NR could never have become what indeed it has become—one of America's most influential publications. Influence someone *you* know today. As we so often say, just use the card facing this page today!

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FROM
Washington

JOHN McLAUGHLIN
Straight

Reagan Loses Steam

It's *Lord of the Flies* time in Washington for the GOP. Every man for himself, and the law of the jungle rules. Last year Ronald Reagan dominated the agenda. This year he is dominated by any fast fist that hits town, notably Bob Dole's, Pete Domenici's, Bob Packwood's, and Dave Stockman's.

In a brutal and gratuitous political assault, Bob Packwood charged in an AP interview that the President goes merrily along on his own track at White House leadership conferences, anecdotalizing all problems away, really uncommunicable with, and in effect over the hill. This is the same Ronald Reagan, by the way, who, less than a year and a half ago, communicated well enough in a protracted presidential campaign to win 489 out of 538 electoral votes, carrying 44 out of fifty states.

Packwood, who fought Ronald Reagan on AWACS with similar elan, might do himself a favor and recall that in 1980 he was one of 17 members of the Senate Commerce Committee. Today he chairs that powerful committee, thanks to Ronald Reagan. Packwood and other Republican senators owe their political majority to the President who swept a sufficient number of Republicans along with him into the Senate to make that majority possible. The worst possible wound, James Watt remarked recently, is inflicted by a friend shooting you in the back.

Crossed Signals

Typically, the White House has decided that the best way to handle Packwood is to pretend that nothing happened. "Why make a two-day story into a two-week story?" Well, as with David Stockman, this story will probably have conspicuous longevity and inspire more breaches of discipline. To bring you up to date on Stockman, he is telling members of Congress that compromise is the name of today's Reagan budget game, with no authorization from the President. Forget the third-year, 10 per cent tax cut, he's telling the Hill. It's expendable. Forget business cuts, notably leasing. Like indexing, they're negotiable. Whereupon the President visits Congress and reasserts his no-compromise position. Troika member James Baker and communications chief David Gergen, siding with Stockman's accommodationist line, give winks all round. With no one knowing what Reagan's true destination is, everyone rides off in his own direction, including business.

The Business Roundtable is a case in point. With delicious and trenchant wit, the *Wall Street Journal* lampooned the Roundtable for their lily-livered venality in calling for tax increases to cover the deficit—especially obnoxious in view of all that the President had done for them. Certainly the Roundtable deserved such chastisement. But there is real point to their defense, i.e., that the White House (not the President) had signaled a flat-out OK for them to take the higher-taxes position.

When not undercutting the President, the White House staff take to trench warfare these days, keeping heads low, growing more and more insulated from the magnitude of their jeopardy, and occasionally hurling a grenade or two at the press, blaming it for the bad economic coverage (overstating deficit horrors) and the El Salvador coverage (pro-Left). Granted the press is incorrigibly liberal, the White House (and the Administration generally) has failed to make its own case for its economic policy—e.g., the colossal defense budget (of which I approve in principle) and foreign-policy needs, although Admiral Bobby Inman's fine performance helped measurably.

Drift, then, is the prevailing condition at the highest levels of our government, with the executive presence too little felt. All, however, is not *Sturm und Drang*. Judge Clark, as newly appointed National Security Advisor, is taking hold, and the effects of that control are beginning to be felt, despite the Jordanian-planes flap. On the domestic side, however, there is no Clark. Ed Meese either is uninterested in the role, or is ruled out structurally, or whatever. James Baker could and would run the domestic side of government were it not for his being more in tune with David Stockman than with Ronald Reagan.

Which leaves, of course, the Gipper himself, fresh from his equestrian holiday in the California hills, and now making plans for his Easter vacation in the Caribbean, at the Barbados estate of actress Claudette Colbert. (Can't you hear the media salivating over the prospect of that juicy coverage?) The enigma: Why doesn't Reagan take charge?

Get Tough Time

Few doubt that the President is very good with short executive strokes—Dutch in the clutch, if you will—but what worries is the long strokes, the distance performance, which economic recovery requires. Get-tough time for Ronald Reagan has arrived—get tough politically, administratively, and intellectually. On his economic blueprint, Reagan's no-give political position must be projected with force and tenacity, or the country will be faced with economic calamity. Two years ago, in January 1980, under Jimmy Carter, inflation reached an annualized rate of 18.2 per cent (*v.* Reagan's 3.5 per cent so far this year). Republicans viewed it with clamorous alarm. Democrats panicked, convened a ten-day caucus, jerrybuilt a new budget, resubmitted it to Congress. By year's end, Carter had jerrybuilt five budgets. Editorials scorned him for vacillation and ineptitude. The people ousted him from office before the end of the year. Carter had sounded an uncertain economic trumpet, and it destroyed him. Reagan must realize that psychology is as important to economics as economics itself.

Second, Reagan must be administratively tough, which inevitably includes appropriate sackings. Thirdly, Reagan must be intellectually tough. People are starved today for ideas, for direction. The President should speak to them over TV on defense, civil rights, environment, aspects of foreign policy, the economy. Reaganology needs redefinition. □

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Saving the Savior

The Protracted Conflict

BRIAN CROZIER

EL SALVADOR ("The Savior") invariably makes me think of Nguyen Van Hieu. Nguyen who? one might legitimately ask. Twenty years ago, I had occasion to describe Mr. Hieu as a busy man. On April 16, 1962, the Communist regime in North Vietnam had broadcast a biography of him. He was described as Secretary General of the National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam (NFLSV) *and* of the Radical Socialist Party *and* of the South Vietnam Committee for the Defense of World Peace. In August of that year, he traveled to Budapest as vice president of the Association of Patriotic and Democratic Journalists.

These were just a few of the 14 parties and other organizations whose formation in the early months of 1962 was announced in Hanoi. And that is why El Salvador reminds me of Mr. Hieu, and Mr. Hieu puts me in mind of El Salvador. The Communist technique of announcing the formation of a multitude of bodies is central to the successful conduct of a "people's revolutionary war." The said bodies are phony and their officials are interchangeable. Their purpose is to lend substance to the claim that the "people's" struggle is, in the main, being conducted by non-Communists—by indignant radicals, democrats, patriots, intellectuals, and possibly the occasional "worker."

Proliferating Fronts

As a matter of fact, El Salvador is doing as well as South Vietnam in its day, by the yardstick of the number of phony organizations considered necessary for the successful bamboozlement of the liberals of the Free World. When I last counted them, there were 14 fronts in El Salvador itself. Ultimate control is clearly vested in the Communist Party of El Salvador (PCES), under its leader Shafik Handal, whose role in "buying" arms from the Soviet Union and other Communist countries, plus the PLO, was described in the State Department's White Paper of just over a year ago.

The body usually exposed to the outside world, however, is the "Revolutionary Democratic Front," with the reassuring Spanish initials of FDR. The traveling salesman for the tiny non-Communist segment of the "Resistance" is Dr. Guillermo Manuel Ungo, who, as far as I can gather, is the only prominent member of the anti-government groups who has not been involved in violence. He goes down well with European socialists and social democrats, is treated with honor by the increasingly penetrated Socialist International.

The point of the above is simply this: that El Salvador is now getting the full treatment of the great Communist propaganda network, as Vietnam did in its day, and with the same objects—to build up the image of a mass resistance movement rising against a brutal and corrupt government; to foster the guilt feelings of American onlookers because of the involvement of their Administration on the side of reaction and oppression; to feed existing or incipient anti-American sentiment among America's allies; in other words, to make it difficult, or preferably impossible, for President Reagan to take the energetic action that will be necessary if The Savior is to be saved.

For my part, I am more than ever convinced that El Salvador is a critical test of American intentions, and a possible turning point in World War III. The loss of Vietnam was a great human tragedy, still playing itself out. Nevertheless, it was possible to lose Vietnam and not lose the wider war.

In these terms, El Salvador is more decisively crucial than Vietnam ever was. If it is allowed to fall into Communist hands, the strategic balance in the Western Hemisphere will be dangerously, perhaps irretrievably, tilted against the United States. The credibility of American power would be gravely, perhaps fatally, affected. For if the U.S. were seen to be incapable of stopping a direct challenge in a minor country in its own backyard, what credence would be commanded by its will to act, say, in the European theater?

At this writing, the signs looked encouraging, after what can only be described as prolonged procrastination (a year of almost complete inaction after the White Paper). Military assistance is being stepped up. An economic aid program for the region, of imaginative generosity, has been unveiled by President Reagan. Nicaragua has been exposed as the base for terrorist/guerrilla operations in El Salvador.

In France, the press is convinced that Reagan's commitment is now for real. The battle of the media is being fought there, and in Britain, West Germany, and other member countries of the Western Alliance, with no less determination than in the United States itself. It takes on a peculiar importance and intensity in France, however, because of the curious ambiguity, and even incoherence, of the Mitterrand government in foreign policy.

Mitterrand's Fuzziness

In Europe, over Poland, over the theater nuclear forces, President Mitterrand is firmly on the side of the U.S. and the Alliance, and loud in denunciations of Soviet encroachments. His advisor on Third World policy at the Elysée, however, is none other than Régis Debray, disciple of Fidel Castro, erstwhile companion of "Che" Guevara.

Typically, the propaganda war over El Salvador has little or nothing to say about the Communist domination of the "Resistance" or about Soviet, Cuban, and Nicaraguan involvement. Nor does it seem to know much about rebel atrocities, of which there has been no shortage. It concentrates heavily on the allegedly appalling human-rights record of the Salvadoran junta and on denigration of the civilian President Napoleón Duarte (despite his immaculate social-democratic credentials) as a stooge of the nasty soldiers.

You may read all about this in London's *Observer* and *Guardian*, or in France's *Le Monde*, and the presentation of the same arguments is identical, language apart, to that in the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times*.

Ronald Reagan should stand firm against the clamor for a negotiated settlement (which would give the Soviets and Cubans what they want, the easy way), and against advance denunciation of the elections scheduled for later this month. If the "Resistance" leaders are so convinced of the justice of their cause and the depth of their popular support, let them take their chance at the polls. □

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EGO JOURNALISM

An Ex-Flack Looks at Reagan and the ADVERSARY PRESS

VICTOR GOLD

IT WAS YOUR standard trendy Washington reception, the festive opening of the American Broadcasting Company's new headquarters in the nation's capital, and, much to the delight of the network brass, Ronald Reagan found time to drop by for a presidential blessing. He had made his little speech, shaken hands all around, and was headed toward the door, when the inevitable occurred:

"Mr. President!"

Strident, insistent . . . who else but Sam Donaldson, ABC's chief White House correspondent? Remember those first moments of the Reagan revolution? As the newly sworn President walked down the ramp following his Inaugural Address, there was Sam, bellowing that question about the release of the hostages in Iran. Vintage Donaldson, letting the new man know that, revolution or no revolution, some things weren't going to change. But that was history, and on this particular festive occasion what Sam wanted, *instanter*, was the inside word on David Stockman's future in the Reagan Administration.

To be sure, Sam's imperative tone notwithstanding, the President had an option. He could have kept on walking and been none the worse for it in terms of his image. But, being Ronald Reagan, he stopped in his tracks, half turned, smiled, and proceeded to frame a reply: Well, he said—as quiche and crêpes hit the floor, notebooks popped out, and recorders were activated—well, he had met with Dave a little while ago and there would be a definitive announcement later that afternoon. Another reporter was halfway through a second question before the President's hosts, much to the relief of his staff, hustled him toward the exit.

Sorry about that, said one ABC executive, fuming over his man Donaldson's having turned a courtesy call into a mini news conference. Oh, that's all right, replied the President: "Sam," grinned Ronald Reagan, "is just irrepressible."

I DON'T CARE what they say, I like Sam Donaldson. Honestly. We go back a long way, Sam and I, to the Goldwater campaign of 1964, when I was a young flack hustling press buses for my first national candidate, and Sam, then working for CBS's Washington television affiliate, was covering his first presidential race.

Do I remember what Sam Donaldson was *really* like, before he became transmogrified into an evening news superstar? Of course. How could I forget? When we first met, opening day of the campaign at Prescott, Arizona, there were only two unabashed Goldwater supporters in our traveling press party. Lyn Nofziger, then covering for Copley, was one; Sam was the other.

He was offbeat, you see, right from the start: a rambunctious news hawk not about to be intimidated by any rulemakers, least of all the doyens of the national media who set the tone and rhythm for coverage of our presidential campaigns. Offbeat, rambunctious, and yet, having said all that, I would never have guessed—not in a million news cycles—that my friend Sam would one day emerge from the pack as master of a new school of political reportage: the ultimate Ego Journalist.

REMARKS OF *the President on the occasion of Mother Teresa's departure from the White House, June 4, 1981:*

HELEN THOMAS (UPI): *How was your visit, Mr. President?*

THE PRESIDENT: *Just wonderful. You can't be in the presence of someone like that without feeling better about the world.*

SAM DONALDSON (ABC): *What do you think about the tax plan?*

In the New Beginning, January 1981, there was much furrowed-browed thought given the need to develop fresh formats for the President's sessions with the White House press corps. The University of Virginia's Miller Center for Public Affairs even issued a "Report on Presidential Press Conferences," replete with observations, recommendations, and helpful hints, e.g.:

> The manner in which presidential press conferences are presently conducted on live television—with reporters jumping up, waving their hands and shouting, "Mr. President," in an effort to gain the President's eye and the opportunity to ask a question—is what many viewers (and participants) find appalling. The easiest remedy for this requires little more than an exercise in presi-

Mr. Gold is national correspondent for Washingtonian *magazine and the author of two books on political press relations. He served as assistant press secretary to Senator Barry Goldwater during the 1964 presidential campaign, and from 1970 to 1973 was press secretary to Vice President Spiro Agnew.*

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THE TERRIBLE COST OF UNION VIOLENCE

Charles Eaves

Larry Crawford had heard the insults, the racial slurs and the death threats before as he crossed the picket line. After all, the strike at Virginia Lime Co. near Pearisburg, Va. had been going on for months. But the strikers were growing more vicious in their language every day. And were those insults, slurs and threats really "just" words?

The verbal assaults on Larry were taking their toll. He couldn't sleep at night. He was nervous, irritable and often depressed. Nothing seemed to improve his appetite or make his crushing headaches go away. Psychiatrists call it "traumatic stress reaction." Men at war call it "combat fatigue."

And then on a cold February day, one of Larry's non-striking co-workers learned what it was like to be shot at. A shotgun blast tore into his car. Fortunately, no one was hurt.

But Larry Crawford realized the same thing could happen to him, to his wife and child. And all because local members of the United Steel Workers refused to accept Larry's right, his need, to work.

With the help of the National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation, Larry and eight co-workers, including Charles Eaves and Raleigh Newby, fought back. Within the law. The strikers were hauled into court and held accountable for conduct later called "vile and degrading" by the judge.

Justice was served in Giles County Circuit Court. Larry and his eight co-workers received a judgement of $99,000 in damages for physical and verbal attacks suffered during the 18-month strike.

But the strikers are expected to appeal their case, which is likely to go all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. Compulsory union dues will pay for their lawyers. High-powered research staffs will seek out every legal loophole to postpone the day when Larry Crawford, Charles Eaves, Raleigh Newby and their families can sleep soundly at night.

The National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation is helping everyone it can. Currently, some 250 cases involving protection from union violence, illegal union political spending, academic and political freedom and other basic employee rights are being prepared or brought before courts across the nation.

Raleigh Newby

For information on how you can help Larry Crawford and his family, write us. We'd like to hear from you today. And so would the Crawford family.

National Right to Work Legal
Defense Foundation
Dept. NR
8001 Braddock Road
Springfield, VA 22160

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dential leadership. The President could enforce order by refusing to acknowledge or answer any reporter who shouts. He answers only those who raise their hands, and allows follow-up questions.

Little more than an exercise in presidential leadership? The *easiest* remedy? How ingenuous these academics. It is one thing, understand, for Ronald Reagan, like no Chief Executive in decades, to assert his mastery over Congress. But "Tip" O'Neill and his colleagues are as mere sheep to be led to a fleecing compared to Sam Donaldson's branch of government. Thus, though the Miller Center did persuade the President to insist on a degree of decorum during his *formal* news conferences, it failed utterly to deal with those techniques of jumping, waving, and shouting reportage developed by the White House press corps during the Ford-Carter years, i.e., the news conference *al fresco*, held on the South Lawn two to four times weekly, and its kindred forum, the movable media feast, held any time or place that members of the corps come within twenty feet—make that fifty—of ever-affable, ever-available Ronald Reagan.

"If you get the question within earshot," one of Sam's print colleagues counseled a newcomer to the Reagan press entourage during the 1980 campaign, "he'll answer it, because he's a decent guy."

Indeed, he would as a candidate, though it sometimes hurt his cause; indeed, he will as President, though it often results in news segments better suited to the media's than the country's needs.

"If we just let him go his own way, we'll have a perpetual press conference," Lyn Nofziger explained, after being faulted during the campaign for what many (including some critics within the Reagan camp) perceived as heavy-handed dealing with reporters trying to catch his candidate in an unguarded moment.

But, alas—or, if you happen to be a member of Sam Donaldson's school, rejoice—Lyn's heavy hand has long since been lifted, his critics having won the day. After all, we wouldn't want to go back to the Nixon Stonewall Age, would we? Of course not. Decency, in the end, prevailed.

Next question.

REMARKS OF *the President while ambulating toward his helicopter in riding jodhpurs, July 22, 1981:*

REPORTER NO. 1: *Any good news from the Middle East?*

THE PRESIDENT (walking and smiling): *Huh?*

REPORTER NO. 1 (bellowing): *Any good news from the Middle East?*

THE PRESIDENT (bellowing back): *Oh, you guys know by now that I'm the most patient fellow in the world.*

REPORTER NO. 2 (in duet with helicopter blades): *Are there any limits to your patience with Mr. Begin?*

My, my, what fun and games. And if the President, not quite hearing the question correctly, had shouted back a "Yes" or a "No," what a titillating lead that might have made on the evening news. Forget the White House staff clarification that would have followed: sufficient to the deadline is the news thereof. Forget, too, whatever impact the President's errant reply might have had on the Habib mission and U.S. peace-keeping efforts in the Middle East. That, Buster, is neither the job nor the responsibility of the working press, and to argue otherwise is to suggest—with *chilling effect*—that there might be some higher calling for the White House press corps than servicing their home bureaus, every hour on the hour.

Are there any limits to your patience with Mr. Begin? Or how about this one, put up for grabs not long after: *Do you agree with General Schweitzer's assessment of a drift toward war with the Soviet Union?*

In both these cases, fortunately, Ronald Reagan, while taking the bait, avoided the hook. Yet, against the day when he, and we, might not be so lucky, let's step back a few paces to examine, in the manner of the Miller Center, exactly what goes on here.

For the record, these come-as-you-are presidential television appearances—informal sportswear when he takes his South Lawn walks to and from the chopper; business suit when being queried, to the great confusion of foreign guests, about domestic affairs—are in fact scheduled as mere photo opportunities. Now, the ground rule for presidential photo opportunities has long been understood, and in former years accepted, by the White House press corps: TV cameramen and still photographers are given access to ceremonial events, e.g., bill signings, meetings with dignitaries, as well as the President's entering/leaving the White House or other site. A reporter pool can observe the proceedings, but only for note-taking purposes.

That, at least, was the rule until the coming of genial Jerry Ford, whose congenital incapacity to look a reporter in the eye and say, "No comment," led to such outlandish spectacles as the leader of the Free World galumphing down a California tarmac during the final hours of the Vietnam War, in order to avoid questions from a press corps in hilarious pursuit. Then came Jimmy Carter, whose personal dislike of the White House press corps was accompanied, with typical Cartersian consistency, by an unwillingness to enforce any rule that might incur its displeasure.

Two pliant, image-obsessed Presidents in a row: small wonder that during this period, 1974-1980, Ego Journalism came into its own, and the presidential news conference took on the Animal House ambience deplored by the Miller Center.

Clearly, Ronald Reagan's decency aside, any President who took office January 1981 was going to have his hands full exercising leadership in the White House press domain. Not only would there be the standard complaints that go with the territory—charges of news management, outcries about credibility gaps—but any attempt to curb the excesses of the Ford-Carter years, when the West Wing leaked like a sieve, would be trotted out as evidence that the new Administration, Watergate-like, was bent on obstructing the people's right to know. To know what? Why, whatever members of the corps deemed important to the national (not to mention their career) agenda.

Thus, by press corps lights, it is now an implied right under the First Amendment that a President and his staff not only be forthcoming on demand, but that the White House also be sensitive to the show-business requirements of modern journalism. For this reason, the Miller Center's recommendation that questioners at formal presidential news conferences be chosen by lot was put into effect only once, then abandoned, following protests by network correspondents. Their complaint? Not that there was anything wrong with the questions submitted under the lottery system, but that Sam, Lesley, Judy did not ask them, and consequently

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were not on camera reinforcing—for the benefit of employers, sponsors, and fan clubs—their certified status as six-figure-per-annum media superstars.

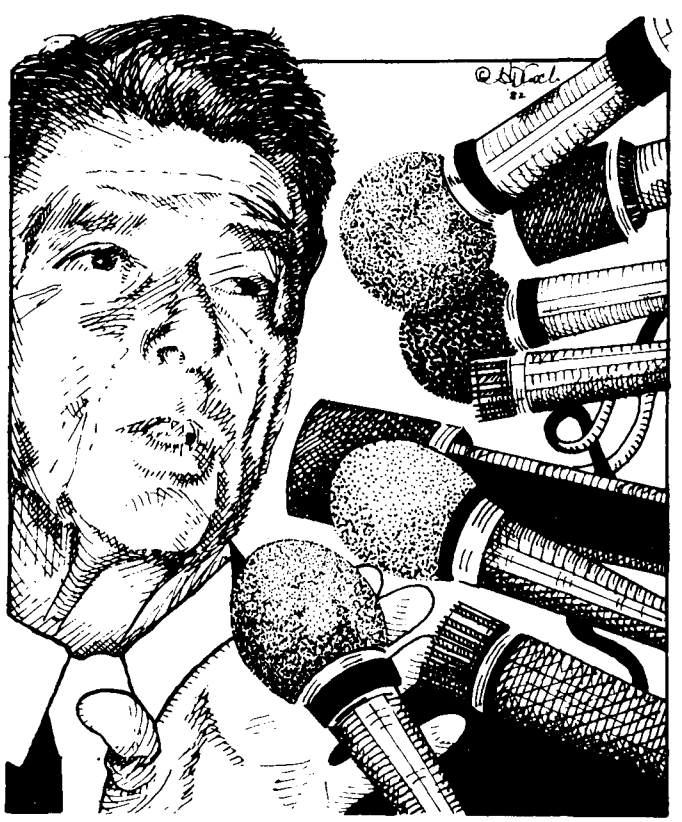
TOM BROKAW, *on the happy coincidence of Britain's summer riots and network coverage of the wedding of Prince Charles and Lady Diana: "I think it's going to make a far better assignment for all of us. I don't wish ill to the British people, and I certainly don't want them to burn down towns for our sake. But there has been a lot of ferment there for some time and it just happens to be breaking out now."*

Judy Woodruff, on the existential meaning of "adversary press": "The White House staff wants order, predictability, no surprises. That makes it easier to make a President look good. But the press yearns for a little confusion, disorder, surprise—even a healthy shock once in a while. The unexpected is news, the expected is not."

Are you listening, RR? Keep in mind, they don't wish ill to the American people, and they certainly don't want us to burn down towns for their sake; but a *little* confusion, disorder, surprise, a healthy shock once in a while—is that so much to ask on behalf of a free, yearning press?

True, your constitutional duty, among other things, is to "ensure domestic tranquillity." But let's be fair. My friend Sam, along with his colleagues at ABC, NBC, CBS, the *Post*, the *Times*, *The Atlantic*, aren't going to rack up any Nielsen numbers or draw down any Pulitzers phoning in, "All's tranquil on the West Wing front."

No, if there isn't any "ferment . . . breaking out," well, then, the enterprising Ego Journalist knows a few chemical shortcuts through "informed White House sources" and "high-level government officials." Understand, it's nothing personal, RR—nor even, as many of us once believed, ideological. Trendy leftism may well be the prevailing wind that blows through your White House press room, but as no less a media favorite than Ted Kennedy discovered in 1980, Ego Journalism cuts all ways. It is amoral, cynical, nihilistic—up to a point. Take the word of an ex-political flack who jockeyed press buses when Sam Donaldson was an embryo seeker after confusion, disorder, surprise; or better still, those of a prescient observer who years ago foresaw the problems your Administration would have coping with an irrepressible press:



> Complete publicity makes it absolutely impossible to govern. No one has understood that better than the daily press; for no power has watched more carefully over the secret of its whole organization, who its contributors are, and its real aims, etc., as the daily press, which then continually cries out that the *government* should be quite public. Quite right; the intention of the press was to do away with government—and then itself govern . . .

All right, three guesses: Was that a) Spiro Agnew at Des Moines, b) the Miller Center, c) Lyn Nofziger? Wrong, wrong, wrong. It was—they'll have to unleash Morley Safer on this bird for the full *60 Minutes* treatment—none other than that old fascist, Soren Kierkegaard.

Funny. I don't recall that he was even middle echelon during the Nixon Dark Age.

TO THE POINT, RR—much as I hate to sound like one of those patronizing *Times* editorialists, or Bill Moyers in full cry—I'm afraid you don't quite grasp the extent of the modern media's challenge to all governing establishments save its own. In your eternally optimistic way, you still hope to plug the leakage of Administration affairs that plagued your predecessors Jerry Ford and Jimmy Carter, to put the horse of orderly governance before the media cart of "complete publicity." But to do that, it's necessary that, one way or another, you persuade those who make up your Administration that the boys and girls on the White House press bus are precisely what they claim to be—*adversaries*. Not friendly folk for sharing inner-office gossip with over the phone or, in the case of your indiscreet OMB Director, over bacon, eggs, coffee, and a live tape recorder.

Yet consider, if you will, the real question to be asked about the Stockman episode, apart from the one that interested my friend Sam. Was it simply a matter of Ego Journalist meeting Ego Politician—further proof, if any were needed, that the passion for anonymity once prized in White House aides has given way to a passion for celebrity? Perhaps. But beyond that, might it not be argued that David Stockman—along with other indiscreet Administration spokesmen in the first year of the Reagan revolution—was merely responding to the signal given by a President who casually chats up affairs of state with his "friends" in the press, anytime they can "get the question within earshot"?

Just a thought, RR, from an ex-flack. Mull it over, next time you approach the portal to the South Lawn. And believe me, it's not that I'm anti-decency or a chronic First Amendment-chiller. As I say, I like Sam Donaldson. For that matter, Brokaw, Woodruff, Stahl, and Greider aren't really bad sorts. It's simply that, where our country's foreign and domestic tranquillity are concerned, I can't say I much like their penchant for healthy shocks. □

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POLITICS

Conservatism and The Founding Fathers

CHARLES R. KESLER

MENCKEN'S DEFINITION of the American notion of musical taste was: "I don't know much about music, but I know what I like." Kesler's definition (as it henceforth shall be called) of American conservatism's notion of principle is: "I don't know what I'm *for*, but I know what I'm *against*."

So great is this studied neglect of principle that many conservatives, though setting great store by the Founding Fathers, doubt whether they would have taken the Founders' side in the American Revolution. This surely is the case with those who persist in calling themselves "Tories." Whatever else "Tory" may mean—can there *really* be partisans of the House of Stuart left? —in this connection it means adhering to the view that George Washington was a traitor who should have been caught and executed for leading an unjust rebellion against British authority.

What Does It All Mean?

But leaving aside the delicious scandal of conservatives shooting the Father of Our Country, those of us who stand by the Founders have the duty to acquaint ourselves with the principles of their, and our, cause. To elucidate the continuing meaning of the Founding was the object of the first in a series of conferences on "The Promise of American Politics: Principles and Practice after Two Hundred Years," held at Wake Forest University in early February under the sponsorship of the Tocqueville Forum on Contemporary Public Affairs.

For this two-day free-for-all, Robert Utley, professor of political science and director of the Tocqueville Forum, brought together four hugely distinguished scholars and polemicists: Harry Jaffa, Irving Kristol, Arthur Schlesinger Jr., and Sheldon Wolin—two conservatives and two liberals, though one of the former calls himself a neoconservative, and one of the latter fancies himself a radical democrat (small *d*). They were entrusted with the "Principles" part of the series; the "Practice" is to come later, in the form of four symposia over the next month and a half, to be devoted to constitutional law, welfare policy, the economy, and crime. At this first session, each participant was to deliver a formal lecture, to be followed by responses from his colleagues and questions from the audience; except that Kristol and Schlesinger had to leave after the first day.

Kristol, Henry Luce Professor of Urban Values at New York University, a regular contributor to the *Wall Street Journal*, and the so-called "godfather" of neoconservatism, spoke first, and his theme was "The American Political Tradition." He took the tradition to be understood better by the people of America than by the scholars, who tend to emphasize one aspect of it at the expense of the rest, whereas the people know it "in their bones"—and, he added, "I mean that almost literally." (Willmoore Kendall used to take the same position, though he located the people's intelligence more centrally: "in their hips.") With that caveat, Kristol proceeded to identify the five most important strands in the skein of our tradition.

Democracy takes first place, for in America the will of the people will ultimately prevail; and the condition and reflection of that will is the prevailing social equality among Americans, a fact that Tocqueville seized upon almost a century and a half ago. As Kristol put it, "That could be a doctor driving his big Cadillac down the street—or it could be a pimp." Republicanism is the second strand, visible in our adherence to a written constitution, the system of checks and balances, and the refining and enlarging influence of representation. "We are democratic but we have no faith in democracy. That's what republicanism means." Faith, he maintained, should be reserved for higher things. In third place is federalism, which serves to educate political men in the limitations of politics and to diffuse insoluble issues, e.g., abortion, among the states. Fourth, capitalism, the necessary but not sufficient condition of a regime of liberty, particularly insofar as it defuses class conflict by providing a constantly increasing pie. And that promise has been kept, Kristol said, noting that today one out of every sixty American households contains a millionaire (based on net assets at death).

Capitalism and Religion

Finally, there is the religious basis for it all, a Protestantized version of the Judaeo-Christian tradition that constitutes, so to speak, the Old Testament to the New Testament of democratic capitalism. An Old Testament is needed to sanctify the religion in the everyday life of everyday people, to "complement, modify, and curb" the self-interest that lies at the heart of capitalism, which, if left to itself, would become "hedonistic" and "disgusting." Democratic capitalism needs religion to supply its "missing elements," to act as an "absolute fundament for our values." For the truth is that our values "are not created, they are inherited." They are "derived from certain dogmatic truths," and our national dogma is a sort of Protestantized civil religion. Reason cannot supply this dogma, any more than it could concoct a "rationalist Ten Commandments."

To this, Harry Jaffa, who is Henry Salvatori Research Professor of Political Philosophy at Claremont Graduate School, objected that Kristol had overlooked the sectarian disputes within Protestantism. He argued that it was only the union of Protestantism with the secular doctrine of natural rights that put an end to religious wars and persecutions; that this union was embodied in such documents as Jefferson's Virginia Statute of Religious Freedom and Madison's Memorial and Remonstrance; and that the principle of separation of church and state was "the glory of our Founding." All three commentators agreed, *mirabile dictu*, that Kristol's presentation stinted the amount and significance of conflict within the

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American political tradition. Above all, he was faulted for ignoring the debate over slavery that culminated in the Civil War.

The speaker that evening was Arthur Schlesinger Jr., Albert Schweitzer Professor of the Humanities at the City University of New York, who quickly launched into a vigorous paean to "affirmative government." "Affirmative government"—who wants to stand for "negative government"?—means saying yes to high taxes, large welfare expenditures, and extensive government regulation of business: in short, to the whole New Deal program, which Schlesinger characterized as the employment of Hamiltonian means for Jeffersonian ends. It was a rousing defense of the progressive Democratic tradition, complete with a jab at "Jimmy Carter's eccentric effort to return the Democratic Party to the days of Grover Cleveland." It fell, however, on deaf ears, or at least on ears sick of the tune. Wolin thought it insufficiently radical; Kristol thought it outdated and unappealing; Jaffa considered it oblivious to the fact that the number of poor people—as well as spending by state and local governments—had burgeoned in response to the Federal Government's warm encouragement of social "problems." In rebuttal, Schlesinger made the revealing admission that, to avoid another Depression, the economy had been so "depression-proofed" that the (now) built-in tendency toward inflation threatens to get out of control.

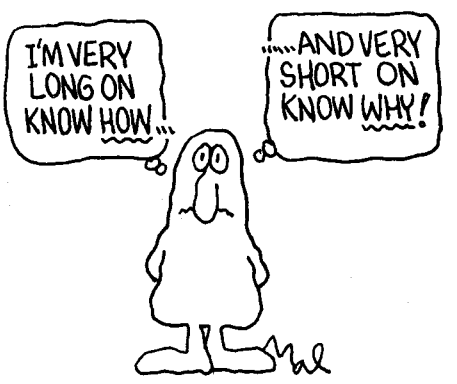
Reagan's 'Genius'

Next day it was the turn of Sheldon Wolin, Chairman of the Graduate Program in Political Philosophy, Princeton University, and founder-editor of *democracy* (small *d*). He spoke on "State and Counter-Revolution," by which he meant the use and abuse of the power of the Federal Government by Ronald Reagan and conservatism in general. The "genius of Reagan," he claimed, was the ability to hold two contradictory images of state power at the same time: the "welfare state," which must be "dismantled," and the "national-security state," which must be allowed to grow to meet an exaggerated Soviet threat.

The "counter-revolution" in social services, according to Wolin, represents more than simply cutting back on entitlements; it is a "depowering" of ordinary people, for economics is really "the pursuit of power carried on by other means." Conservative economic theory amounts to "a theodicy for an industrial age," a set of rationalizations designed to legitimize the power elite in American society. As such it is part of a tradition in American life running back to the defeat of the "rudimentary democratic forces" of Anti-Federalism in the struggle over ratification of the Constitution. The victorious Federalists aimed to "depoliticize a people" used to active and continuing participation in their state legislatures. Likewise, the Hamiltonian program of the 1790s—a national bank, funding of the war debt, the protection of infant industries—was part of a political economy designed more to strengthen the state than to raise standards of living. As such it was a precursor of the "national-security state," which emerged full-blown after World War II, when an economy dominated by the military utilized anti-Communist rhetoric to "mystify" the public.

What is required now is "redemocratization," which must begin by blowing away the "Hollywood haze" surrounding Reagan. That accomplished, new forms of political action must be developed that will encourage our "nurturing impulses" and our sense of locality and community. Wolin concluded his talk by suggesting the anti-nuclear movement as an avatar of this new democratic radicalism, inasmuch as it is a grass-roots movement challenging the authority of "experts" and presenting an opportunity to circumvent "the traditional methods of handling international relations."

In response, Jaffa attacked Wolin's thesis as "romantic socialism" that played into the hands of the enemies of freedom. Wolin was not amused; he promptly denounced Jaffa for thinking that all his opponents are fanatics, and even swiped at him with the tarbrush of—of all things—Straussianism, which in some circles, one supposes, is worse than Communism, or even than anti-Communism.



The last word of the conference was reserved for Harry Jaffa, who spoke that evening on "Human Rights and the Crisis of the West." That crisis, he said, consists pre-eminently in a forgetfulness or misunderstanding regarding the meaning of human rights, which is also a misunderstanding of the meaning of the American Founding. For the "idea of a common, or universal nature, with corresponding universal rights and duties, a concept known for millennia as natural law, . . . is today held in nearly universal disesteem." Yet the public philosophy of the American Founding," built upon this idea, is "the only moral and political teaching in the contemporary world comparable to Marxism-Leninism in its scope and in its inherent claims to authority." But while the Soviet leaders and millions of their followers believe and preach the gospel of the proletariat, who is there in the West who understands and speaks for the rights of humanity?

Kristol Unclear

To take a prominent instance of conservatism's failure in this regard, Jaffa turned to Irving Kristol's 1981 *Wall Street Journal* article "The Common Sense of 'Human Rights.'" Jaffa began: Kristol's "instinctive understanding, that neither our economy nor our foreign policy is defensible without a moral argument, is sound. His difficulty—and it is the problem of American conservatism as a whole—is that he does not have a moral argument."

The gravamen of Jaffa's charge was that Kristol's notion of human rights has no theoretical grounding in nature, hence that it cannot refute—and finally will be absorbed into—the Soviet doctrine of human rights. That Marxism has its own human-rights teaching, and policy, is perhaps too little appreciated in the West. It is Revolution: since the realization of the true rights of the true man—Communist man—awaits the worldwide Revolution that will mark the end of the class struggle. But to oppose this counterfeit doctrine of human rights based on the dialectical necessities of history, the West must possess an understanding of human rights anchored not in history but in eternity, that is, in nature, which is "the unchanging ground of changing experience."

(Continues on page 375)

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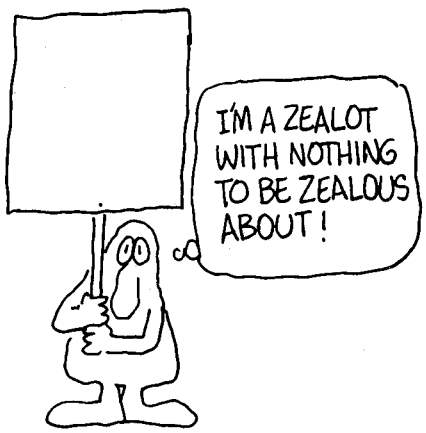
help!!!!

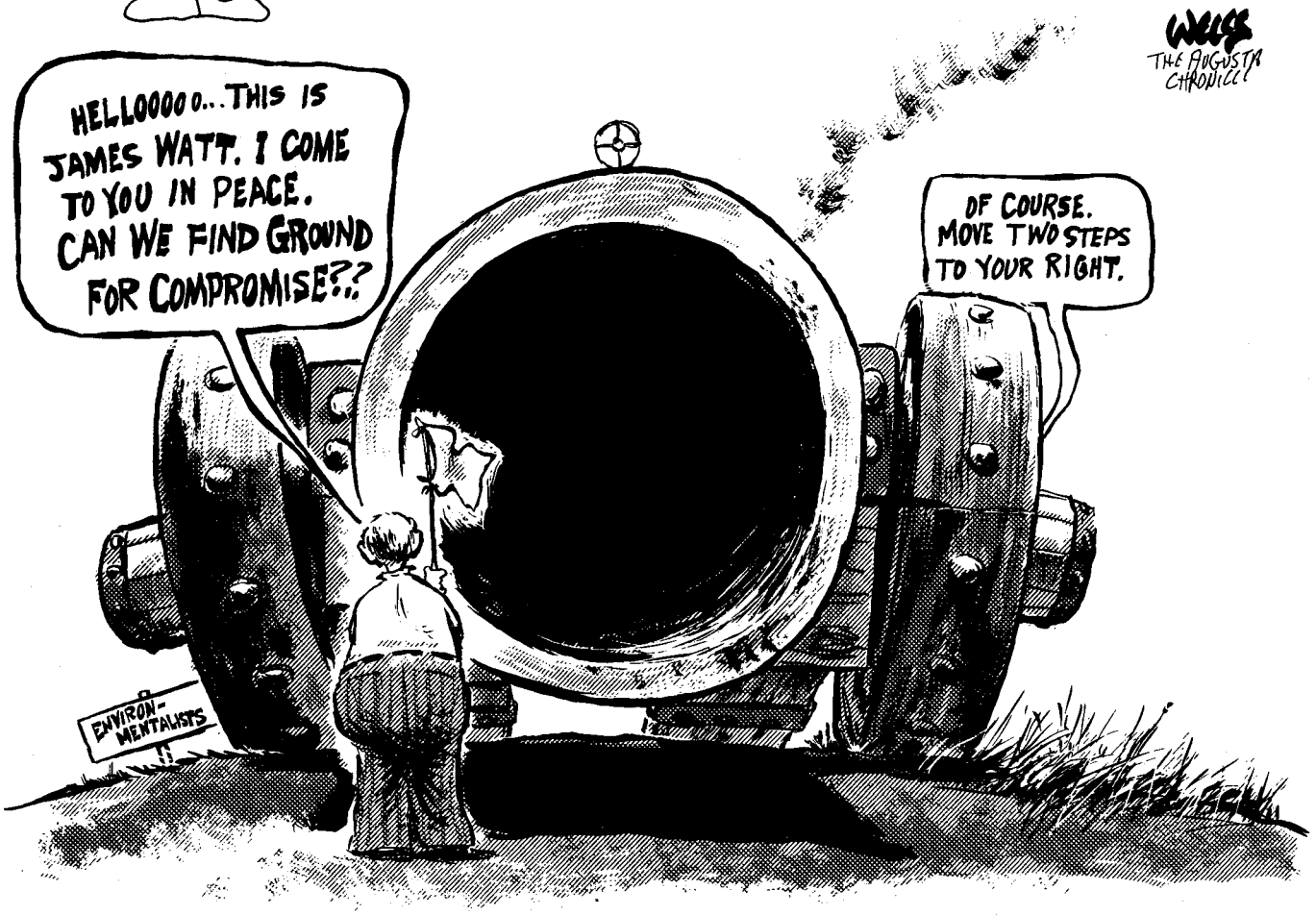
General Jones's Parting Thoughts

We've yet to spawn a Clausewitz,
Although hope springs eternal;
Most leave to join a think tank
Or stagnate at full colonel.

W. H. VON DREELE



"A night of nostalgia awaits you. We've got grass, hash, speed, LSD, and the entire Vietnam War on video cassettes."


WELLS
THE AUGUSTA CHRONICLE
HELLOOOO...THIS IS JAMES WATT. I COME TO YOU IN PEACE. CAN WE FIND GROUND FOR COMPROMISE?!?
OF COURSE. MOVE TWO STEPS TO YOUR RIGHT.
ENVIRON-MENTALISTS

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"Is the eye of a needle a loophole?"

Martin, *Punch* Rothco

"I now start thee, World War III! Boom! Bam! Crash! Bang! Kerflooie! Pow! Voom! Ka-boom! Ka-bang! Ka-pow! Ka-putz! BIG silence. The end! Amen! If you heard that, Major, just kidding. Just kidding!"

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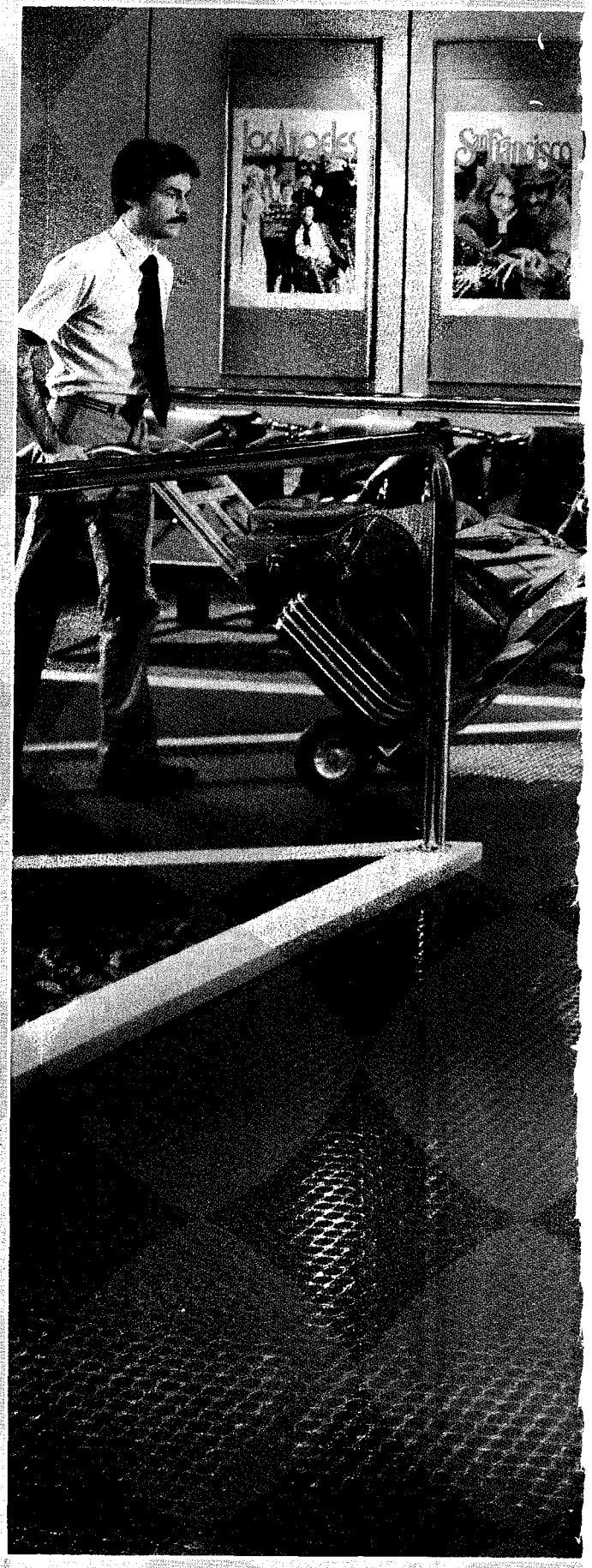
WHEN WE CREATED A TOUGH HIGH-TRAFFIC FLOOR, SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL HAPPENED.



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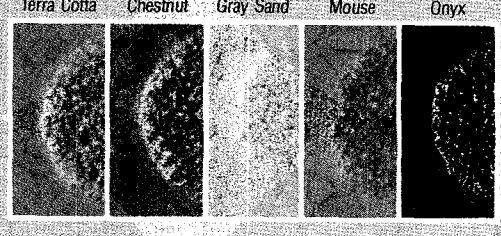

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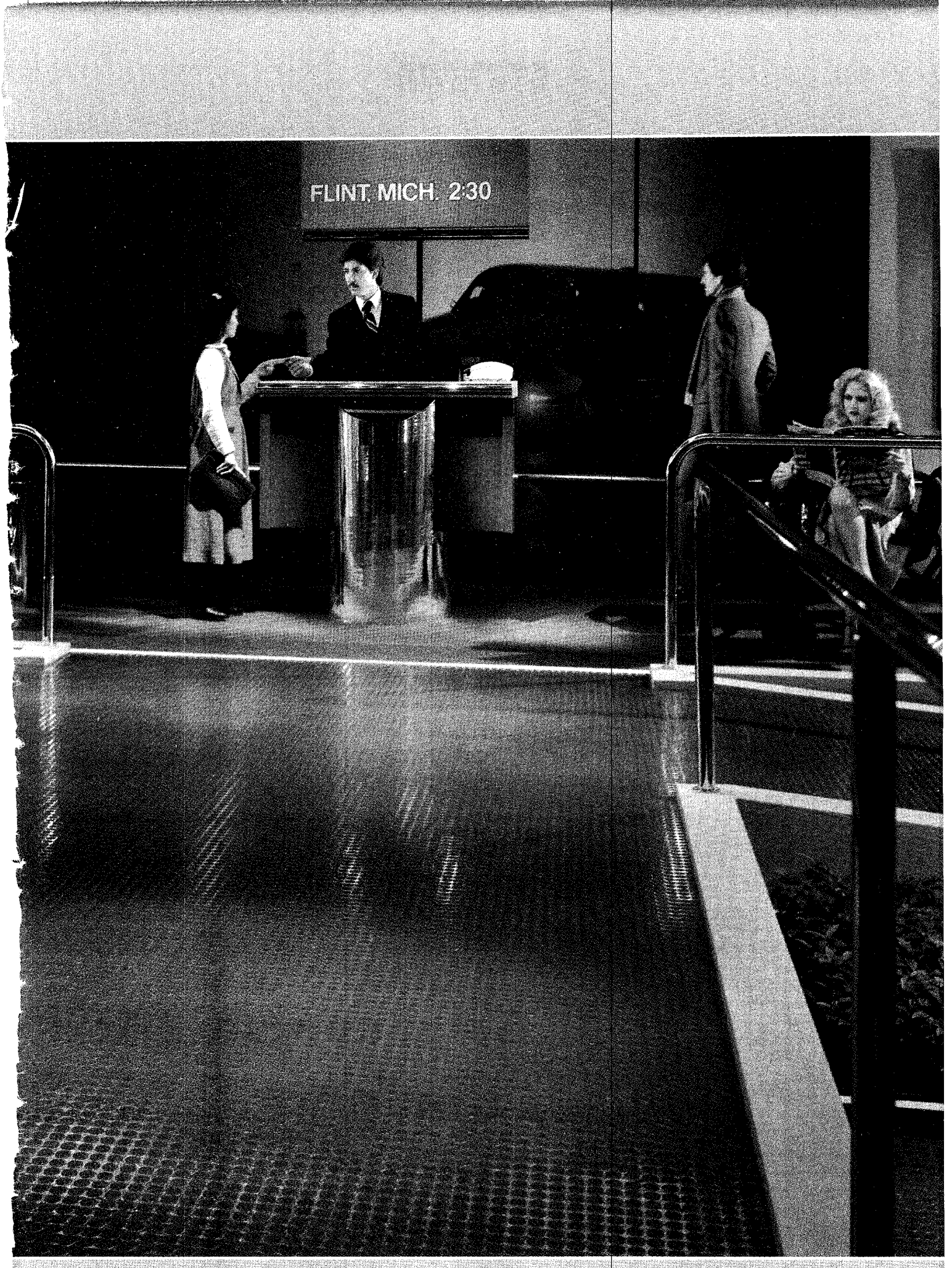

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MONT PELERIN

In the nine years that the Pinochet government has been in power, Chile's economy has undergone a transformation that, in the words of Milton Friedman, is 'comparable to the miracle of postwar Germany'

The Chilean Example

JOHN CHAMBERLAIN

WHETHER BY LUCK or foresight, the Mont Pelerin Society gets full symbolic value from the spots it chooses for its conferences. The general meeting in 1980 was held at the Hoover Institution in Palo Alto, which happens to be next door to California's Silicon Valley, whose traffic in computer chips had given the lie to those who said American inventiveness was through. The 1976 commemorative meeting in St. Andrews, Scotland, in honor of the two-hundredth anniversary of the publication of *The Wealth of Nations*, still lingers in the memory with every order Don Lipsett gets for his Adam Smith neckties, a thriving free enterprise if there ever was one. But the biggest symbolic break occurred toward the end of 1981, when Senator Pedro Ibañez, speaking for the Mont Pelerin Regional Organizing Committee, welcomed some two hundred members and guests of the society to a regional meeting in Viña Del Mar on the breathtakingly beautiful Pacific coast of Chile.

There was some irony in this locus for a Mont Pelerin Society meeting. Chile is still run by a military junta, and Ludwig von Mises, one of Mont Pelerin's earliest champions, had said that if he were to be appointed a dictator the first thing he would do would be to abdicate. But, given circumstances that would surely have turned Chile into a Castroite appendage of the Soviet Union, it was fortunate for Mont Pelerin economic principles that the junta had taken over. Even more than Hong Kong, site of the Mont Pelerin general meeting in 1978, or Salamanca, Spain, where Mont Pelerians in 1979 learned that Spanish economists had anticipated the Austrian school as far back as the sixteenth century, Chile is a living teacher of Mont Pelerin economic principles.

In 1973, in an heroic burst of energy born of desperation, a despoiled middle class led by pan-beating housewives backed the military junta that had tossed out the thoroughly infiltrated government of Castro's good friend Salvador Allende. The Communists had thought they had Chile in their grasp even though Allende held office by virtue of only 36 per cent of the vote. But fate had another dispensation in view. Mont Pelerin believes in the power of ideas, and the free-economy idea had taken hold in Chilean intellectual circles when Allende was still contesting power with the socialistic Christian Democrats. By a fortunate circumstance a whole younger generation of Chilean economists had studied at the University of Chicago under Milton Friedman. By another lucky chance the head of the military junta that took over in 1973, General Augusto Pinochet, had a really open mind about economics.

The 'Chicago Boys' slashed the Chilean government's budget by 25 per cent across the board. Taxes were eased, and the budget fell into balance

The story is that Pinochet holed up in the presidential palace for a year with Professor Paul Samuelson's Keynesian textbook, only to reject Samuelson for a blueprint presented by Friedman's Chilean "Chicago boys." Friedman himself made a now-legendary trip to Chile in 1975, where he lectured Chileans—including Pinochet—on monetary theory in particular and "freedom to choose" in general. Fired by Friedman's persuasiveness, an authoritarian government became the guarantor of what was soon to become the freest economy in all of Latin America, if not of the world.

I first visited Chile some six years ago with Allan Ryskind of *Human Events*. Chile was then still suffering from withdrawal pains, and there were the usual gripes that go with a cutback of "entitlements" anywhere. Today, as the Mont Pelerin visitors could see when they looked beyond the windows of the Hotel Miramar at the stream of Datsuns, Toyotas, Subarus, and Volkswagens (practically no Detroit cars) moving through Viña Del Mar to Chile's busy port city of Valparaiso, the Chilean venture in a free economy is long since out of the blueprint stage. Granted, a few problems have cropped up lately, but nothing that is out of line with the worldwide recession.

Shortly after Allende's suicide, the Chilean inflation rate peaked at around 1,000 per cent. Disdaining the compromises that have been forced on Britain's Margaret Thatcher and that now threaten the supply-side revolution of Ronald Reagan, the "Chicago boys" slashed the Chilean government's budget

Mr. Chamberlain's memoir, A Life with the Printed Word, *will be published later this year by Regnery/Gateway, Inc.*

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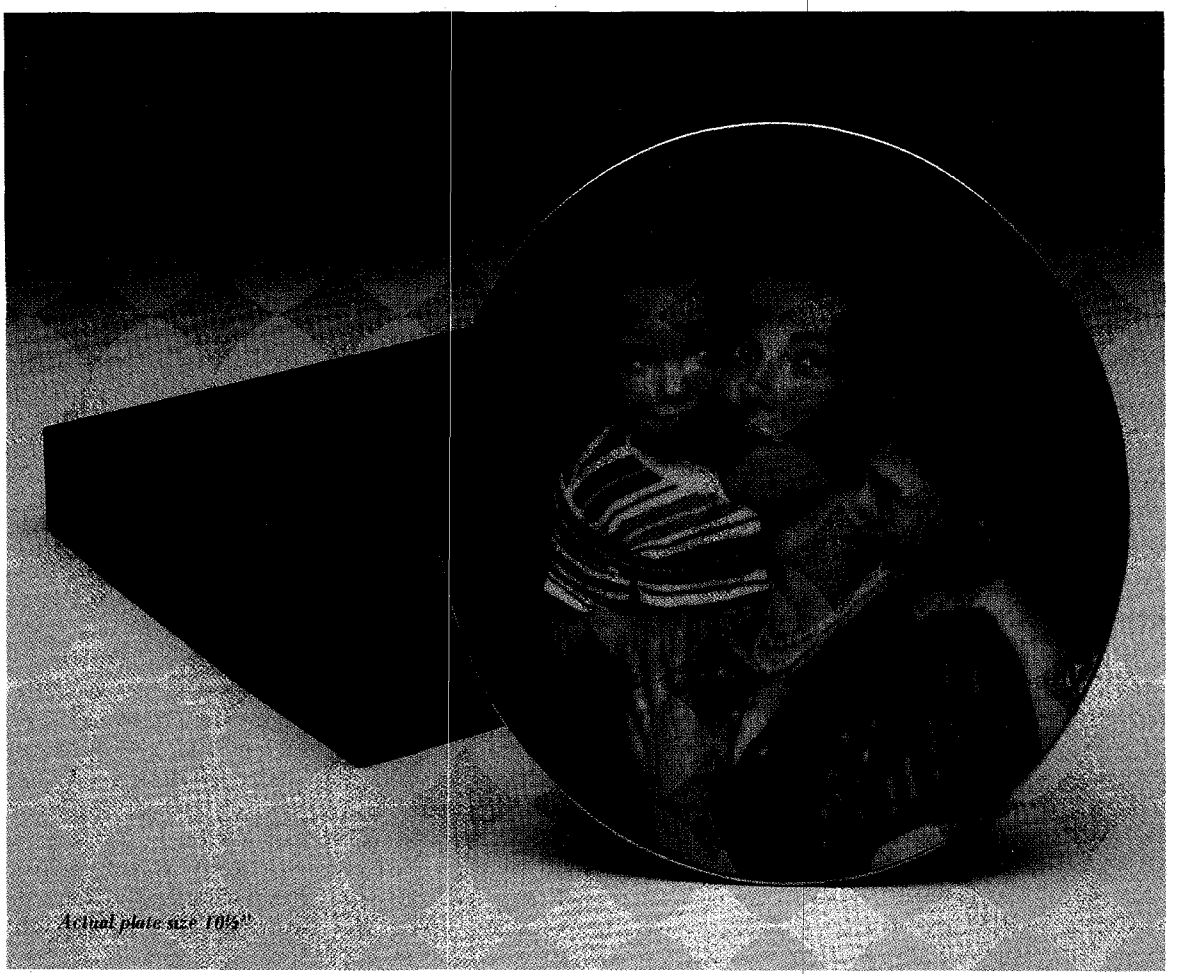
Mother's Day gift – this unique Norman Rockwell plate



Created from the artist's painting, The American Mother, done in 1951 and since mysteriously lost

As the famous French artist, Toulouse Lautrec, created masterpieces out of poster art, so the beloved American artist, Norman Rockwell, did a poster painting he called *The American Mother.* Unaccountably lost, now a ceramic reproduction of the painting has been made available by a private collector of which 17,500 copies have been made – an issue sufficient to create ready re-sale without limiting appreciation. Each plate is hand numbered in gold, unpierced, with a special bracket for safe hanging. Priced at $47.50 including bracket.

Pleasantville Collectors' Society, Dept. NR-8,
62 Eastview, Pleasantville, NY 10570

Send ( ) plate(s) *The American Mother.*
Enclosed is my check for $_____
plus $2.50 for shipping. Or, charge to my AMEX ( ), VISA ( ), Master Charge ( )–
Card No. _____expiring_____.
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Delivery for Mother's Day assured on all orders received here by April 23, 1982.

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by 25 per cent across the board. Taxes were simultaneously eased, and the budget, whether or not because of the workings of the Laffer curve, fell into balance. With less need to monetize debt, the peso strengthened, and the annual inflation rate now stands at some 12 per cent. For those traveling with American dollars, as the Mont Pelerians discovered, meals in Chilean restaurants are now going for New York prices. But Chileans, spending their own currency, are making out far better than their cousins on the other side of the Andes in an Argentina that is still coping with a never-ending need to index for the sort of inflation that the Chileans have stopped.

Friedman's "freedom to choose," applied to Chile, has brought a return of foreign capital to a country that no longer threatens private enterprises with nationalistic expropriation. The climate in Chile's midsection is comparable to California's, and Chileans have discovered they have substantial export crops in fruits and vegetables. Chilean wines are of the best. The country is no longer dependent on its copper deposits: it has found oil down near Tierra del Fuego. Jon Lindbergh, son of the flier, has been busy trying to domesticate a salmon industry in Chile's cold southern rivers. Tariffs have been drastically cut on imports, and quotas are a thing of the past.

Chile's comparative advantages were subtly reflected in the agenda of the Mont Pelerin meeting. The Latin Americans who read papers to the conference exuded an air of confidence. To be sure, some of them inserted intellectual stop-loss orders into their texts to cover the possibility Pinochet's ultimate successor might not be a Chicago boy. But the new Chilean constitution is supposed to take care of that, and the Latin American speakers at the Hotel Miramar did not stint on their endorsements of what has been happening in Chile. The Northern Hemisphere speakers, on the other hand, though they still pinned their faith on limited, or "proper," political democracy, were exasperatingly concerned with ways and means of outwitting their own interventionist governments.

In a paper on "The Chilean Way to Market Economy," Carlos Francisco Caceres expressed what may have been subconscious pity for Northern Hemisphere inability to take government off the producers' backs. "If political authority," he said, "is not armed with the courage to rise above the pressure of the play of interests, it will prove extremely difficult for an impersonal regime to emerge that will have the will to prevent privileges of whatever nature . . . Fortunately, the features we have pointed out as requirements for setting up a market-economy regime are found in our country. All of them have even been included in the constitution approved in September of last year." With due humility, he warned against the "uncertainty" that is part of human existence. But his final admonition was to the Western world as a whole. "External events," he said in a peroration directed at his North American and British colleagues, "may also take place . . . to weaken the strength of the nations of the Western world in the projection of a libertarian society."

Chile is considering a return to some sort of parliamentary rule, but Pinochet will retain a veto on political activity for a few years to come

The paper that was circulated by Rolf J. Luders of the Catholic University of Chile recalled the days of Salvador Allende in the spirit of Wordsworth's "old, unhappy, far-off things, and battles long ago." Chile was then a victim of the "well-known incentives for governments to benefit 'small' groups at the cost of inflation and/or lower incomes for the rest of the population through State intervention." In those benighted days, said Luders, "people thought that the most obvious way to industrialize was through protection; that the easiest way to control inflation was through price fixing; that the resulting shortages could be easily and efficiently resolved by government enterprises; that the best solution to low private rates of investment was to increase public-sector investment; and so forth."

In Luders's opinion the worst thing about the old order in Chile was that "neither the general public nor most politicians or even intellectuals clearly realized the relationship between . . . State interventions in the economy and the loss of individual freedom. This made it possible to have legislation which allowed the Marxist leaders, when they were elected in 1970, to take complete control of virtually all aspects of the economy without even having to ask Congress for new laws." It was Garet Garrett's "revolution from within the form," and it turned Chilean intellectual discourse over to Newspeak. A freely elected government ended by taking virtually all economic freedoms from its citizens.

The choice, eventually, was to let Chile anticipate the coming of 1984, or to start things off in a new direction. The country took its chances when it welcomed the military coup. But, as Luders reminded the Mont Pelerians, the Pinochet government, soon after the takeover, declared that "a) man has natural rights which are superior to those of the State; b) the State should be at the service of man, and not the other way around; c) the State should only undertake any economic activity or regulation if no lower organ is fulfilling the need adequately (principle of subsidiarity); d) the principle of subsidiarity assumes the strict observance of property rights as well as the existence of free enterprise in the economy, e) the existence of a strong, just, and impersonal government, and f) the heightening of personal merit and effort as a moral principle." Certainly, these are universally unexceptionable principles.

Chile is considering a return to some sort of parliamentary rule, but Pinochet will retain a veto on political activity for a few years to come. So far as one can tell from the polls, the majority of Chileans do not quarrel with the present moratorium on politics. The Northern Hemisphere's contributors to the Mont Pelerin arguments, with different enemies in view, could not bring themselves to give unqualified endorsement to their southern colleagues' acceptance of the dictatorship of a military man, enlightened though he might be. Neither England nor the United States has any military tradition that might favor the protective intervention of a junta. So the papers read by Arthur Shenfield and R. M. Hartwell on ethics and capitalism, by Barbara Shenfield and Anto-

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nio Martino on private *versus* public education, and by Reed Irvine and Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn on freedom of expression and misinformation in the Western world, had London, Washington, Paris, and Bonn audiences in view.

The papers read by James Buchanan and Gottfried Dietze on "Democracy, Limited or Unlimited" presupposed a pluralistic attack on problems. Buchanan could not possibly recognize the "either-or" implications of the Chilean experience as pertaining to his own country, where we should be "shoring up the flaws that have allowed modern governments to expand far beyond the bounds envisioned by our Founding Fathers." When we can see Howard Jarvis, say, generating popular approval of Proposition 13, we must know that it is possible to limit government without recourse to military force.

Milton Friedman, who certainly cannot complain that he has not had his way in Chile, has rated what has happened to the Chilean economy as "comparable to the miracle of postwar Germany." Yet, at one point in the Viña Del Mar proceedings, Friedman felt obliged to address a word of warning to his Chilean friends. The normal economic mindset of any military regime—so Friedman said in an extemporaneous speech—must favor regimentation as a principle to be invoked whenever appearances make it expedient. Chile happens at the moment to be a glorious exception. But to preserve the gains made under Pinochet, Chile, so Friedman insisted, should re-establish parliamentary democracy at the earliest possible moment.

Well, is Friedman right? Northern Hemisphere Mont Pelerians must say he is. Even so, it is lucky that the Chileans have already accepted Pinochet's unilateral decision to turn the administration of social security over to seven or more private insurance companies who are being charged with the responsibility of investing workers' old-age savings in productive enterprise. We are still waiting in the Northern Hemisphere for a pluralistic government to come up with such a common-sense settlement of a problem that we must solve soon . . . or else. □

Generic Poetry

Jove Books has issued a line of generic books, including generic science fiction, generic romance, and generic adventure.

Generic Love Poem

One eve we met upon the strand,
We danced beneath the harvest moon;
Your beauty made a willing prisoner of my heart,
That night in June.

Now we are married to each other,
I to you, and you to me;
And when your head is nestled next to mine, dear,
I hear the sea.

Generic Revolutionary Poem

The workers are marching!
Tramp! Tramp! Tramp! Tramp! Tramp! Tramp!
The workers are fighting!
Thud! Thud! Thud! Thud! Thud! Thud!
The workers are breaking the bonds of oppression!
Smash! Smash! Smash! Smash! Smash! Smash!
The workers are assaulting the citadels of repression!
Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom!
The workers are grinding the faces of capitalist pigs!
Crunch! Crunch! Crunch! Crunch! Crunch! Crunch!
The workers are overthrowing capitalism!
Crash! Crash! Crash! Crash! Crash! Crash!
The workers are winning!
Tramp! Thud! Smash! Boom! Crunch! Crash!
To usher in a new era of peace and tranquillity!

Generic Optimist's Poem

Per'aps yer fightin' in a war,
An' yer ammunition fails;
Per'aps you are a spy they've caught,
An' they're yankin' out yer fingernails:
Don't get gloomy or depressed,
Just whisper when they take a rest:
"Life can dish up storms and trials,
But my best bet's to hand out smiles!"

Per'aps yer business soon will fail,
Yer wife just left you yesterday;
Per'aps yer house has just burnt down,
An' yer only son now says he's gay:
Just say these words, don't yell or scream,
Take Valium or Thorazine:
"Life can dish up storms and trials,
But my best bet's to hand out smiles!"

Generic Art Poem

Fingers flush, feeling smooth over paper.
Rectuses tug orbs hither, yon, blackness flickers on retina
As optic nerves flash to, through dura mater patterns
of blacknesses over the snowy, oppressive field of
resinated pulp . . .
Within, within;
Cerebellum conducts search; patterns sought and selected,
And genus, species, class, order, family, tribe, jerked
forth like hooked fish, to flap in air;
Broken lines—
Regular rhythm—
Tricks of speech—
And judgment honed from years of Gestalt construction,
of reading of Spinoza as the corned beef and cabbage
simmer, speaks:
"Oh, Jesus, another bloody poem."
And instructs ponderous fingers to flip the page.

—Jonathan Swift Somers II

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Comments ON 'WHY I AM NOT A NEOCONSERVATIVE'

What's the point of it all? For a quarter-century now, in the pages of *NR*, countless shades and varieties of "conservatism" have appeared, ranging from Max Eastman to Russell Kirk, from the early Garry Wills to the recent Michael Novak, from Thomas Molnar to, well, to George Gilder. So what's new?

Some years ago, in one of *Commentary*'s intermittent symposia, Bob Tyrrell wrote: "Those who would argue affirmatively for an active American foreign policy, a democratic polity balancing freedom with equality, and the maintenance of high culture have a great deal in common regardless of what they think of Franklin Roosevelt."

Shall we leave it at that, guys? Conservatives of all shades are now stuck with being in power, and I think it's high time to cut back on the internecine chin-wagging, pull together, formulate policy, and govern.

John R. Dunlap
Santa Clara, Calif.

Welcome aboard, Mr. Gilder; I hope in your next intellectual (and delightful) outing that you overtly repudiate the central thesis in *Wealth and Poverty*, which is (after all is said and done) that a positive government is essential for curing economic and social ills.

William T. Farrar
Spanaway, Wash.

George Gilder is a brilliant economist. He knows what he talks about when it comes to the solution of our socialist fifty years of nonleadership. His thought on this is practically perfect.

But: how dare he speak for me, as a Christian-conservative, on matters of morals? He asserts that the Right, meaning Bryant and Falwell, command the majority opinion of Christians. They do not "command" mine. Anita Bryant knows nothing about homosexuals, when all she can quote is pre-Christian biblical books. And as for Jerry Falwell and the Moral Majority, Barry Goldwater said it best.

Douglas Conder
Phoenix, Ariz.

One tires of hearing about "democratic capitalism." There is no reason to yoke the natural economic order with what is not the natural political order. This new, allegedly conservative form of the Democratic Dogma (the Divine Right of Majorities) threatens to pervert our foreign policy as much as the old, liberal form has. While the latter is based on bourgeois self-doubt, the former is based only on bourgeois self-righteousness. Using the word *aristocratic* in its radical sense, could we not have an *aristocratic* capitalism?

T. John Jamieson
Livonia, Mich.

Mr. Wattenberg's response to George Gilder was no response at all, testimony to the fact that the neoconservatives, among whom Ben Wattenberg is one of the best, indeed have weaknesses.

Saying that the neoconservatives have not gone far enough, however, should not prevent us from applauding how far they have gone. More specifically, the audience of Kristol, Podhoretz, Bell, et al. has been, to a significant extent, the Jewish liberal intellectual who, while torn from his socialist ideology by the "facts" of Communism, had not yet found a new rationale. The neoconservatives provided that ideology, for a number of drifting Jewish intellectuals. This was no mean achievement.

Finally, Gilder, in his litany of indebtedness to neoconservative writers, nowhere mentions the brightest and the boldest of them all, Will Herberg—perhaps because Will was not a neoconservative at all, only the most brilliant theologian of the Right that America has produced. What a shame that the majority of his writings are lost in old periodicals, unavailable, and that some clever publisher does not bring out his collected essays.

Rabbi Samuel H. Dresner
Deerfield, Ill.

Mr. Gilder starts off correctly by stating that a major flaw in neoconservatives' thinking is their dislike of capitalism. But is it necessary that he stick both feet in his mouth in defense of capitalism? To state that "altruism is the *essence* of the positive-sum game of capitalism" (emphasis mine) is a clear case of gross negligence on the part of the defense. The essence of altruism—sacrificing one's own life in selfless service of others—is inimical to the principles of capitalism.

Capitalism is based on the principle of individual rights (life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness). The fact that individuals in a capitalistic society *do* show good will toward their fellow men is merely an effect of individual freedom, not its cause. A person who cannot, or will not, claim the right to his own life will never understand the importance of upholding the rights of others. With "friends" of capitalism like George Gilder, who needs enemies?

James Slagter
Prospect Park, N.J.

Both George Gilder and Ben Wattenberg make telling points, and both leave unresolved contradictions.

Mr. Wattenberg cites Tom Wolfe on the "Me Decade": "In this remarkable society of ours, plain normal people are today doing what aristocrats have always done—sex, tennis, liquor, sloth, dope, you name it. . . . every man an

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aristocrat, if you will." Mr. Wattenberg feels that this "is a function of the prosperity of the United States and that it is probably pretty good." A comforting thought—unless you believe that some of these things are either wrong or dangerous. (No, I don't mean tennis elbow.) If that is the case, then maybe a society where fewer people do them is better off.

Mr. Gilder recognizes much of this: "the world does not allow you to 'have it all.'" And yet, while he wants a different "all," Mr. Gilder apparently believes that you *can* have it. He is in love with the Industrial Revolution, and for good reason. It greatly raised the general level of prosperity and comfort, and it allowed individuals unprecedented freedom to develop their abilities, no longer bound by the locality of their birth or the type of work their fathers did. But for that very reason, it led people to pull up their roots and to think of mobility as progress; hence, while drugs and pornography and sex education were probably not inevitable, it *was* inevitable that some of the settled values Mr. Gilder would like to preserve would be left behind.

Can we reconstruct them now? Individual people and families certainly can; but as for a whole society, I fear Mr. Gilder underestimates the force of, shall we call it, the demand-side argument—i.e., if a large number of people did not want to buy pornography, liquor, and dope, they would not be so widely available. If Mr. Gilder seems starry-eyed about capitalists (whom he sees as *primarily* altruistic!), so does he seem starry-eyed about his fellow Americans.

Linda Bridges
New York, N.Y.

How interesting that George Gilder's shift from neoconservative to conservative also represents a shift to greater faith in God than in man! A survey of my liberal and conservative friends also reveals this correlation between faith in God and conservatism. And I would suspect that it can to a large extent explain the difference between the Heritage Foundation's conservatism and the American Enterprise Institute's neoconservatism.

A principal reason for the religious revival taking place in this country is the need for an antidote to fear, so rampant in our daily lives. There is no question but that faith in the Almighty gives one greater strength and courage to face up to challenges and adversity. Those who have turned to the Bible's wisdom probably know some of the appropriate Scriptures:

"Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27).

"A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways" (James 1:8).

"Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded" (James 4:8).

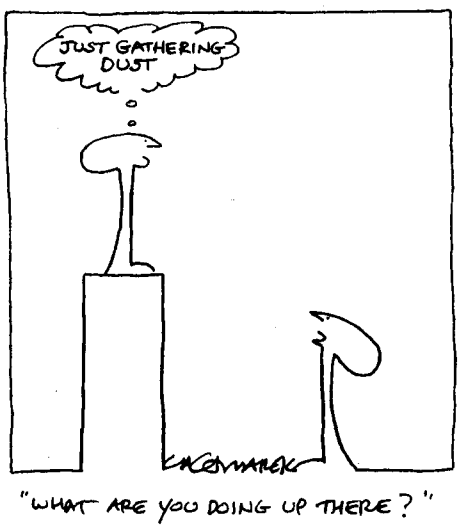
"I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth" (Revelation 3:15, 16).

Arthur Sharron
Encino, Calif.

Long ago, a fellow who was an authority on the subject told me I wasn't a real conservative. Since the neoconservatives have never let me play in their treehouse either, I can remark on phylum conservative Americanus and its sub-orders without fear of being hurled even further into outer darkness.

The genuine conservatives, George Gilder's new friends, are great at bolting together abstractions to form a doctrine and then tinkering with it until it can explain nearly everything except why ordinary Americans seldom elect them. Like their relatives, the neoconservatives, the genuines sometimes make the frightful mistake of believing a professional politician is one of them. This is how the neos got connected with D. P. Moynihan. Some of the ones I know are quite sheepish about it.

The neoconservative sub-order of Mr. Gilder's phylum, which he seems bent on liquidating, has interesting characteristics. First, the neoconservatives are men and women with the considerable mental equipment and humility required to change their minds after age 25 on fundamental questions. Damn few people can do that. (Mr. Gilder is one of them, incidentally, though he may be excelling too well in this.)



Second, they collectively know a lot more than Mr. Gilder's new friends do about "the enemy." Many of the neoconservatives served in Communist and socialist regiments. Some of them were outstanding officers. As we all know, the Communists and socialists have forgotten more about engineering opinion and winning elections than most of the genuines will ever know. Hence, the neoconservatives are very useful sorts. Indeed, without the smarts and the drive supplied by this lesser breed, an objective observer could argue that the genuine conservatives would still be the powerless makers of elegant noises they have mostly been since World War II.

Third, Mr. Gilder's neo relatives have worked miracles in convincing congressional committees and individual members of Congress that many Great Society programs and some older federal interventions need drastic revisions or liquidation. Telling his new friends that they knew by instinct that many social programs were disaster-bound may fuel another round of applause for Mr. Gilder. But he also should have told them that it was neoconservative analyses, not conservative polemics relying on doctrine, that have led to the many positive reforms now going forward. Incidentally, in the case of welfare reform, the neoconservatives' analyses and arguments dealt largely with morals and the value of strong, stable families, concerns Mr. Gilder claims they underrate.

Common sense, particularly the sort that's handy in politics, is normally in short supply among doctrine-builders. Anyone having sense enough to suppose it will be warm next July knows that our enemies are moving troops and advanced weapons into attack formations. They are poised to smite conservatives of all descriptions. Under such circumstances, Mr. Gilder, there must be better employment for your talent than bashing your former mentors while swelling the self-esteem of the sillier among your latest set of friends.

R. Randolph Richardson
New York, N.Y.

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Contending Creeds in Africa

From the Continent

ERIK v. KUEHNELT-LEDDIHN

THE VISIT of Pope John Paul II to Africa was, from several points of view, an important venture. I will not deal here with the purely spiritual aspects (insofar as they can be separated from the rest). What I want to discuss are the cultural and even political implications of the Pope's trip.

The head of the largest Christian church represents not only a universal body but one intrinsically connected with and anchored in European (or, if you prefer, Euramerican) civilization. There are tendencies in the Catholic Church clamoring for "nationalization," especially in the Third World. The Church, so they claim, has no future there if she does not harmonize organically with local cultures and civilizations. There was a time, especially in the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, when such claims had a certain justification, and the Jesuits then tried desperately to establish Asian Rites in order to facilitate their missionary work. At the time it was unfortunate that these efforts failed.

Yet, what might have been a brilliant idea four hundred years ago would not be so today. The Catholic Church is like a tree that each year adds another ring to its trunk. The center is Judaic; then come the Greek, Roman, Celtic, and, finally, the Teutonic, Slavic, and "native" rings. The Euramerican ring is a very substantial one, and there is no reason why it should prove a source of embarrassment to Asians or Africans. Today it is evident that a global civilization is in the making, and that it will be Western in character.

Christianity's Competitors

In Africa, this Western, Christian civilization is vying both with old native traditions and customs, and with two other forces—Islam and Socialism-Communism. These, too, have ultimately Judaic roots; and they resemble each other (though not Christianity) in both having nonpersonalist, i.e., collectivist aspects; but they bank on different drives. Socialism-Communism appeals to the naïve urge to embrace allegedly up-to-date political fashions, while the appeal of Islam is more narrowly religious. Still, the non-personalism of Islam encourages a synthesis with Socialism. The only obstacle is the atheism of orthodox Communism. Save for that, the Koran would not be opposed to it.

Islam and Communism are also united by their lack of love and their ability to mobilize hatreds. (In the Koran love is mentioned only once, in 5.59, and there it has nothing to do with love of one's neighbor, only with love between Allah and man.) Both fiercely attack the Christian West for its "colonialism" and "imperialism." In Africa, ironically, these animosities pervade only the new ruling classes; they seldom occur among the common people, who, especially today, recognize the benefits of colonial rule. P. A. Talbot, in his *Tribes of the Niger Delta*, tells how a very old woman came a long way to talk to a British administrator, the first white man she had ever seen. "Blessings and peace," she said to him. "In the days of my youth we knew only fear, danger, and never-ending fights. Only the white man has brought security and peace to us. This is the reason why I wanted to see your face before I die."

Of course, this does not mean that the white man is innocent of the woes of Africa today. But his greatest crime was *de*colonization. When it became evident that, in the ebullience of puberty, black Africa wanted to rid itself of parental control, the mother countries let it go almost without a sigh.

Still, on his trip the Pope carried certain trump cards. He could have pointed not only to the material benefits of the colonial past, but also to the immense work of education and medical care undertaken by hundreds of unsung Catholic and Evangelical missionaries.

Yet, despite the efforts of those who sacrificed health and life in service to the natives, there really is such a thing as darkest Africa. Just a few years ago the Ibos of southeastern Nigeria wanted to establish a state of their own. Their rebellion was put down, and there followed a great famine (which Catholic and other charities tried to alleviate). The Pope visited this area. He also went to Dahomey (now called Benin), Gabon, and the former Spanish colony in Equatorial Africa.

Dahomey's history is hair-raising. Its kings had an army of amazons who organized a sadistic bloody orgy, the *Zenanyana*, consisting of three "evil nights"—popular feasts highlighted by mass hangings. In Equatorial Guinea, John Paul II saw a land of martyrs: the dictator Francisco Macías Nguema, now happily murdered, engaged in a Neronic persecution of Christians, many of whom were crucified. No church could operate during his bloodthirsty reign, which, in a way, was even worse than that of the Moslem Idi Amin Dada. Nor should we forget the horrors of the Congo, especially in the northeast, with the unspeakable blood orgy of the Simbas, who killed and even cannibalized some Italian Red Cross workers.

No Joke

Africa is not funny. And the missionaries did not bring a sense of sin or fear to happy, naked people living in paradisaical innocence. They brought glad tidings to men and women who up to then had lived in fear and anguish. But in spite of great advances made over the past twenty years, Christianity has not had an easy time in Africa. Islam, too, holds many trump cards. It is a simple, handy, male religion, sanctioning polygamy on a continent where women are the main labor force. Socialism-Communism, too, finds fertile soil: it banks on envy, a deep-rooted human instinct, and ambitious politicians find its unification of political and economic power to be an attractive prospect.

Yet the horrors of Africa should not lead us to forget that when we lose our spiritual values we Europeans, too, become monstrous. Of this we have given proof in the three great, interconnected revolutions of our age—the French, the Russian, and the German. The spiritual element is, after all, not just a footnote in the history of mankind. □

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Lucky No Longer

Why We Were in Vietnam
By Norman Podhoretz
Simon & Schuster, 223 pp., $13.50

CHARLES BURTON MARSHALL

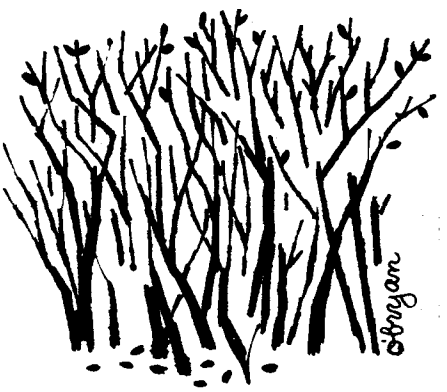
Norman Podhoretz's *Why We Were in Vietnam* is a sharp disquisition in political pathology. Given my own reactions at the time—as long ago as 1954 I was convinced of the futility of getting into war over the future of a distant and recalcitrant land against close-by forces bent on possession, but once we had entered the conflict I was loath to be seen siding with people who assailed the U.S. for criminality rather than mere bumbling—I am favorably disposed toward Podhoretz's negative answers to these questions: ". . . did that defeat truly mean what the antiwar movement seems to have persuaded everyone it meant? . . . Does the United States deserve the moral contumely that Vietnam has brought upon it in the eyes of so many people both at home and abroad?"

Still, his conclusions—epitomized in a final paragraph affirming Ronald Reagan's description of our involvement as "a noble cause" and disparaging Jimmy Carter's allusion to " 'the intellectual and moral poverty' of the policy that had led us into Vietnam and had kept us there so long"—leave me unsatisfied. Reagan's approbatory adjective echoes Hoover's endorsement of Prohibition—"an experiment noble in purpose." Conceptual righteousness and operative morality are not the same. Like automobiles or watches, policies have to work to be any good. They must give plausible promise of working to be acceptable. The noble experiment in Vietnam was a colossal fizzle.

Podhoretz traces its vexing course from the standpoint not of military history or diplomatic history, though these enter into account, but of the interplay of ideas in the nation's public life. Little to hang one's head about but much too much to shake one's head about emerges.

The scene is populated by a miscellany of hawks and doves and mutable birds that metamorphose from the former to the latter breed—least respectable among them being sundry of JFK's and LBJ's attendant lords who, once displaced, outdid each other in trying to divert blame for the mess they themselves helped to get the country into and then to aggravate. Turkeys abound in the metaphoric aviary. Owls are few. One is made to wonder whether individual acumen had drained away at higher levels of policy-making, or something had gone wrong systemically—or both, interacting.

Podhoretz depicts a JFK unequal to his responsibilities, "cavalier about difficulties," and predisposed to will "the end but not the means—just as he had done before at the Bay of Pigs." In Podhoretz's analysis, the main policy props —Robert McNamara at the Pentagon, "the Secretary of Defense, whose arrogance was a function of his belief that he could devise a system for dealing efficiently and successfully with any enterprise, whether an automobile company . . . or a guerrilla war," and McGeorge Bundy and Walt Rostow on the NSC staff, respectively "a man . . . whose arrogance was unshakable" and one "who was confident that he knew everything"—supplemented rather than complemented the President's lacks.



Under such guidance, the United States, ". . . failing to take the measure of the local obstacles both political and military, refusing to face squarely to the dimensions of the commitment that would inevitably be required . . . for all practical purposes, in all but name, went to war in Vietnam"—but in a piddling sort of way. That the U.S. did so at all is hard for Podhoretz to square with JFK's well-authenticated indifference to the place. The missing clue—I submit this not idly—is that JFK was chafed by the hazing over things in general and Vietnam in particular that Nikita Khrushchev had given him at their Vienna meeting and felt impelled to retaliate with a gesture.

PODHORETZ'S interpretation of LBJ mentions "flamboyant personality . . . and hyperbolic style." More willfulness than gumption, one might say. LBJ's connections with great affairs had been at the Capitol, where policy-making is a matter of laying down the law rather than having to cope with elusive and obdurate external circumstances. Character and experience combined to make him a specialist in policy by jawbone. He started out emulating his predeces-

David Evanier, *a novelist and short-story writer, is fiction editor of the* Paris Review. . . . **Charles Burton Marshall** *is a contributing editor of* NR. . . . **Jeffrey Meyers** *is the author of* Painting and the Novel *and* Homosexuality and Literature. *His book* Hemingway: The Critical Heritage *will be published by Routledge next year.*

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sor in trying to manage war "on the military cheap" (in Podhoretz's phrase). Forced to a choice of getting out or putting up, he opted grudgingly for incremental inputs of troops and matériel that raised the U.S. from an auxiliary to a principal belligerent role—but "on the political cheap."

A steadily expanding war was to go hand in hand with an aggrandized version of the general welfare—the Great Society—as well as tax reductions, the whole mix without stimulating inflation. How? Simply by so decreeing. So great was the import of words in Johnson's outlook that he thought he could conceal the impact of the hostilities by downplaying them in speeches and by avoiding the rite of declaring war. No one can yet see an end to the multifarious malign effects of such frivolousness, however foxy or even well-intentioned the man in charge thought himself to be.

One such effect, not handled by Podhoretz, was demoralization of the armed forces, particularly the Army. Projecting troops into the most miserable sort of combat—war of attrition—without appropriate doctrinal preparation has inevitable and serious destructive effects. Even more importantly, enduring harm is done to morale by sending officers and troops into the field to kill without the state's having assumed moral responsibility by declaring war.

In the longer term, extrication from Vietnam following failure of the LBJ surge could not have been creditable, and was not. As inheritor of the task, Richard Nixon, with Henry Kissinger as coadjutor, did try to salvage a measure of success—"on the strategic cheap." The formula—easing out U.S. forces in phase with building up the shaky indigenous forces to be able to hold their own—probably never had a chance. Fatuously counting on the spirit of detente, Nixon and Kissinger, both practitioners of Realpolitik, even hoped for Soviet diplomatic help in saving something from the wreck.

At the inevitable petering out—in Gerald Ford's tenure, though not his fault—Congress even withheld promised ammunition from America's beleaguered erstwhile allies. I recall my chagrin at the time: none among a couple of dozen newspaper editorial writers in my audience at an American Press Institute seminar saw anything wrong in this betrayal.

In Podhoretz's rueful retrospection, "The people . . . were never enthusiastic about the war. . . . For America the war in Vietnam was not a people's war, it was a war of the elites, conceived and executed by 'the best and the brightest.'" He adds, ". . . this cannot be said of the decision to cut the South Vietnamese off and leave them . . . vulnerable to a massive North Vietnamese invasion. Those decisions were made not by a small elite but by a majority of the members of the Congress." Hence, ". . . a measure of responsibility for them . . . also belongs to the people whose representatives they were and whose wishes they believed themselves to be carrying out."

THE KERNEL of goodness in the enterprise—notwithstanding all the muddling—has been dramatically vindicated by massive barbarities committed following the Communist victory. Podhoretz wrings what satisfaction he can from contrasting the tragic realities with what fabricating scriveners and professors in the antiwar movement said would happen if the U.S. would just stop interfering in Vietnam. Yet one is left to ponder the phenomenon of public indifference. The polls that LBJ was wont to cite, demonstrating major support for the war, may well have been arithmetically right. What the support lacked was not numbers but fervency. Popular enthusiasm is fragile for a war whose goals need a dozen strung-out syllogisms to explicate.

One must counterpose the limits of strategic reach to the appeal of meritorious purpose. Anxiety about triggering interposition by the adversary's sponsors constricted U.S. military operations. The result was an attempt to fine-tune warfare at a level conceptually sufficient to cow the immediate enemy without doing enough damage to impel others to the rescue. No sooner had the U.S. begun stepping up combat during LBJ's Presidency than it was felt incumbent to iterate the modesty of hostile intentions. Threats were offset by reassurances. The message was: We are trying to scare you, but not very much. It is hard to intimidate the kittens while being leery of the cat. In the crosspull between determination and trepidation, U.S. strategic planners got to worrying more about attrition inflicted on the other side than on their own.

Another dour thought concerns hubris. Those in the top policy slots seemed never to doubt the susceptivity of remote realities to U.S. designs. One day in the Senate, as I remember, the younger Kennedy brothers in back-to-back speeches demanded American measures to put an end to corruption in South Vietnam—something Americans find hard to do in New York or Massachusetts. Examples of such overreaching abound in the Podhoretz account—most of all in designs for refashioning another society, low in civic culture, in the midst of a war.

Hubris includes the assumption of having luck on one's side; it has to do with traits that led Napoleon through many triumphs to a final undoing. Our side had lucked out in Korea, more or less. The idea of a declaratory staving-off of Communist conquest in Southeast Asia was a case of playing luck. Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon also counted on luck—certainly not on exacting strategic assessment—once the issue entailed putting up a fight. Johnson similarly counted on luck—surely not on analysis—in seeking to replicate the World War II feat of concurrently conducting external war, stimulating upward mobility within the American society, producing more of everything, and restraining inflation. It recalls Louis XIV's words to Marshal Villeroi returning from the defeat at Ramillies: "At our age we are no longer lucky." That thought is hard for the nation to get used to. □

The Dean's December
Saul Bellow
Harper & Row, 312 pp., $13.95

BARE BONES

DAVID EVANIER

Here we have the bare bones of Bellow: the novel as essay, stripped of the whimsey and decoration of character and fanciful prose. Bellow at his worst. This book has the disquieting effect of encountering an old friend—a good friend—who has undergone some startling decline.

But the symptoms and patterns have been there from the mechanical beginnings in *Dangling Man* and *The Victim*. They have persisted, notably in the metaphysical obsession with the anthroposophy of Rudolf Steiner that vir-

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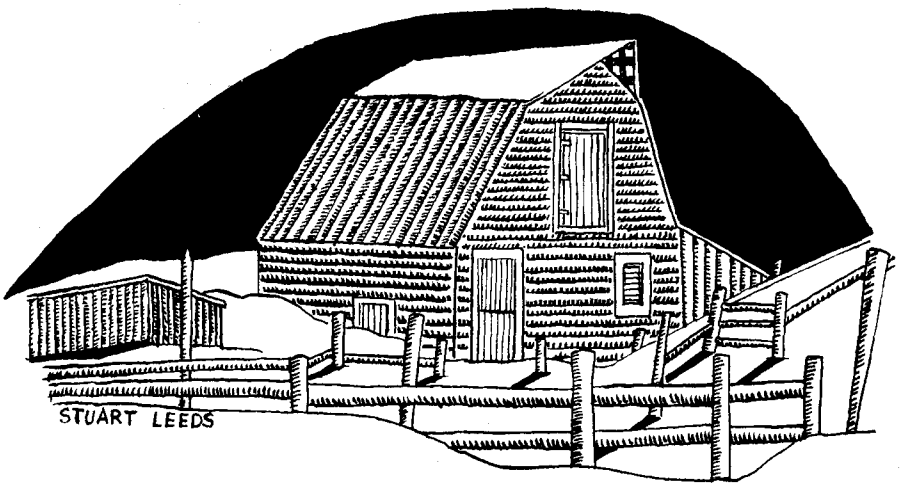
tually took over the latter part of what was supposed to be a portrait of poet Delmore Schwartz in *Humboldt's Gift*.

The truth of the matter is that Bellow's passion for cerebration has weighed down and sometimes canceled out his interest in fiction. No novelist except Thomas Mann has been able to carry such heavy excess baggage without being crushed by it. Bellow's enduring achievements are his short novel *Seize the Day* (his only fully fictional work, free of ideas and opinions), the excellent recent story "A Silver Dish" (published in *The New Yorker* in 1978), the fictional sections of *Herzog*, the collection of earlier stories entitled *Mosby's Memoirs*, and his fully realized novel, *Henderson the Rain King*. "I have no literary interests, but am made of literature," Kafka wrote. "I am nothing else, and cannot be anything else." Bellow, alas, is a mix of things. Only a book as bad as *The Dean's December* could occasion a reassessment at this point in the career of a writer considered to be America's most important living novelist.

BELLOW'S erraticism is a fact, and a prior awareness of it could give the reader a more sober estimate of this dismal book, where stale ideas are unalloyed with narrative brilliance. *The Dean's December* is not primarily a comedown symptomatic of decline, but really another manifestation of Bellow's multiple careenings as a writer. For Bellow is not only seduced by ideas (as here). When Norman Podhoretz wrote of the willed, forced quality of affirmation of *The Adventures of Augie March*, this was a true insight, which can be related to the gallery of overblown characters (bigger than life: yet really balloon-like) in *Humboldt's Gift*. For Bellow is a "literary" writer in two senses of that slippery word. Sometimes his prose brilliantly invents reality on a deeper level. At other times his words run away from (rather than toward) him, and the reality he presents glossily outstrips and supplants a felt reality. Nevertheless, Bellow has shown a feeling for the possibilities of life that has lifted his work to high planes of achievement.

The Dean's December has the odd tone of having emerged from (or been exhumed from) a time-chamber; there is a musty feeling of removal and unreality in its stilted language ("rum" as an adjective is used eight times; there



are phrases like "a dumb matching a dumb," "shut in like a birdie in a cage," "the generality-mind," "He felt like a pity-weirdo") and the tired nature of the subject matter: a stereotyped radical student out of the Sixties, ossified reflections on the decline of the inner cities and black crime. The dialogue does not help. When the dean tells his wife he has lost his job, she says, "But how disagreeable for you, Albert." Here is a patch of descriptive prose:

> Slender, nervously pretty, Lydia Lester had long hair to shield her from the world, reticent long hands, pink lips. From the bad side of the tracks unwanted reality had descended on her (how the tracks meandered now!) and which way would she go? Back to maidenliness, he expected. . . .

The writing is pale, wooden, flat; the characterizations evaporate into air after the reading. Albert Corde, dean of a Chicago college and a former journalist, finds himself in the totalitarian atmosphere of Bucharest (well rendered). He has traveled there with his wife, a Rumanian astronomer, to visit her dying mother. The head of the hospital, a colonel in the secret police, forbids the wife more than three visits.

Corde has a lot of time on his hands and spends it in an isolated room where he reflects on his situation in Chicago. He has created a stir by bringing to prosecution a black ex-convict who has murdered a white student, and also by writing a series of articles for *Harper's* about black inner-city crime and Chicago's political and judicial corruption. We are treated to large sections of these articles, flashbacks detailing his conflicts with his radical nephew over the ex-con, a visit to a saintly ex-murderer who operates a detoxification center, a serious conflict (should he? shouldn't he?) over whether he will again man the barricades by championing in print a geologist who has discovered the source of all modern ennui and insanity (lead poisoning), and familiar ponderings about the fate of "the American idea."

What is particularly irritating about the Chicago scenes is that in general they do not transcend what we already know about the urban situation or about the kinds of characters Bellow depicts. They do not go beyond the journalistic accounts we have been reading for years. The Chicago flashbacks do contain the strongest scene in the book, the route to a kidney dialysis unit for outpatients, where the details are specific and new and suffused with the writer's involvement and feeling:

> I am guided by a Filipino nurse through old tunnels, baked dry by mammoth boilers. The pipes drip rusty water. By the door of the morgue, wheeled stretchers line the walls. The dried blood would be scraped from them if there were staff enough, but there is no money. In these subterranean passages there are alternating zones of heat and chill. Paleotechnic furnaces hugely branching out send warmth up into the ancient wards . . .

By the book's end, Corde's mother-in-law dies, the black in Chicago is convicted, and Corde loses his job. After many musings about the negative influence of journalists, intellectuals, and academics in American life, we leave him pacing the chilly observatory while his wife is on duty at Mount Palomar.

Beyond the creaky plot, thin characterizations, boring cerebration, and poverty of style, there is one further thing that needs to be brought up about this novel. Every writer at some point in his career is involved in a project that goes totally, inexplicably wrong: the tone is not what was intended, the characters

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remain woodenly in place, the anticipated excitement is absent. *The Dean's December* is such a book. It certainly has some of Bellow's worst traits. But primarily it should be seen not as a harbinger, a roadmark, or a symptom of Bellow's status now—but as an aberration. □

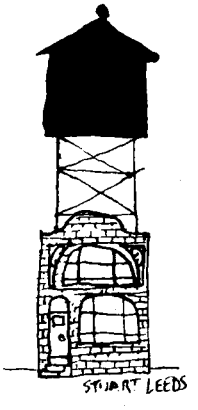
Lectures on Russian Literature
By Vladimir Nabokov
Harcourt Brace, 331 pp., $19.95

RUSSIAN ICONS

JEFFREY MEYERS

Imagine a teacher of Russian novels who was born into an aristocratic famly under Czarist rule, whose grandfather imprisoned Dostoyevsky, who had met Tolstoy, knew Bunin; who was educated at Cambridge, spent his youngmanhood in France and Germany, had perfect English, was a master stylist in both his native and his adopted language; who was witty, urbane, sophisticated, exotic; who spoke with great authority (and considerable bias) on literary craftsmanship. This was Vladimir Nabokov, who taught fortunate students at Wellesley and Cornell from 1941 to 1958, until the abundant royalties from *Lolita* translated him to a luxurious pleasure dome in Switzerland.

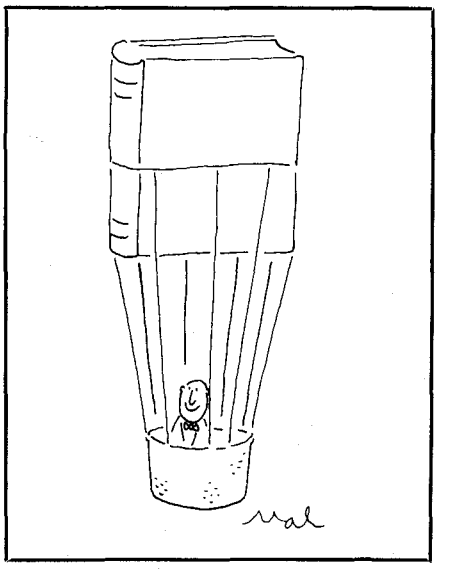
The sections in this handsome volume, superbly edited by Fredson Bowers, range from fragmentary notes on "The Death of Ivan Ilyich"—in which the author "toys, he Tolstoys with words"—to polished chapters reprinted from Nabokov's 1944 book on Gogol. The lectures are brilliant commentaries on extensive quotations (often retranslated into his own English version), with an aesthetic emphasis on technique, structure, style, imagery, and "the social background of words, their fashions, history, and period associations." These talks *within* books as well as about books are accompanied by his drawings of railroad cars, tennis costumes, and skating outfits. He hated "the vulgarity of human interest" and vainly prophesied that no biographer would ever catch a glimpse of his private life (they have, and will). For Nabokov, art, "the magic capacity of creating life out of nothing" was an enchanting and elaborate game.



Nabokov's lectures resemble the invitation cards of Johnny Hoop in Waugh's *Vile Bodies*; "These had two columns of close print: in one was a list of all the things Johnny hated, and in the other all the things he thought he liked." In the first column, for Nabokov, were Gogol, Turgenev, Chekhov, and Tolstoy; in the second, Dostoyevsky and Gorky. But there is no pedagogical point in demolishing major writers scarcely known by the students, who would have learned more if Nabokov had substituted Pushkin, Lermontov, or Goncharov. He condemns Gorky as a colorful phenomenon, of little importance as a creative artist; and is blind to the emotional power and spiritual depths of Dostoyevsky for aesthetic reasons, just as Conrad was for political ones.

Nabokov, eager to debunk Dostoyevsky, calls him a mediocre sentimentalist who lacked taste and wallowed in the psychological reactions of sick souls, in "the tragic misadventures of human dignity." He complains that the characters do not develop; laments the lack of a sensory background and the replacement of a natural with a moral landscape; and claims that Dostoyevsky, destined to be Russia's greatest playwright, "took the wrong turning and wrote novels. . . . Considered as novels, his works fall to pieces; considered as plays, they are much too long, diffuse, and badly balanced." Nabokov concedes that Dostoyevsky had a wonderful flair for comedy mixed with tragedy. But he absurdly calls *The Double* his best work; and illogically insists that Prévost's *Manon Lescaut* is "far better written and therefore far more moving" than *The Brothers Karamazov*.

The long chapter on *Anna Karenin* (as Nabokov insists it should be called in English), which contains illuminating comparisons with *Madame Bovary*, is the most valuable part of the book. Nabokov observes that Tolstoy simultaneously introduces the themes of violent death and violent passion; that Anna plays a double role by restoring harmony in Dolly and Stiva's marriage while destroying Kitty's romance with Vronsky. (He might have added that she also respects and betrays her husband, loves and abandons her son, challenges and submits to the judgment of society.) Anna is doomed not for her open defiance of social convention or her adultery, but because her "alliance was founded only in carnal love."



Nabokov claims the interior monologue was invented by Tolstoy, though it actually appeared much earlier, in the disconnected thoughts of Mr. Jingle in Dickens's *Pickwick Papers*. But his interpretation of Anna and Vronsky's linked nightmares is masterly. The guilty dream derives from their recollection of the man killed by the backing train that first brought Anna to Vronsky: "a dreadful-looking little man, with a bedraggled beard, bending over a sack, groping in it for something, and talking in French about having to beat iron." The thing to be crushed by iron is Anna. Just before her suicide the nightmare recurs in reality when she hears French voices and sees a hideous little man stooping toward the wheels of a railway carriage.

Nabokov believes "The word, the expression, the image is the true function of literature—*not* ideas," and categorically dismisses all social, political, and philosophical issues as extraneous to art. He therefore offers no explanation of why the Russian genius suddenly flourished, during a period of oppression and slavery, in the last half of the nineteenth century. And he draws no parallels between the end of the Czarist era, the decade before the Great War in Habsburg Vienna, and the 1920s in Weimar Germany, when an astonishing concentration of creative genius coincided with the final stages of political collapse. □

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As you probably know . . .

. . . Bill Buckley has been writing a series of spy thrillers that have become bestsellers. Small wonder: they really are fascinating books. They chronicle the daring, brash (and *brainy*, of course!) adventures of Blackford Oakes, a dashing ex-Yale CIA agent. One of his best and most intriguing assignments occurred in *Stained Glass*, a book now rather hard to come by.

But we still have a number of copies of *Stained Glass* in the original hardcover edition (retail price $8.95) and if you don't yet have this exciting book yourself here is a great opportunity to get your own copy.

Right now we are offering a hardcover copy of *Stained Glass* FREE and postpaid to you if you'll do us the favor of subscribing to *National Review* magazine (or renewing your present subscription, no matter when it expires) for the full year (26 issues) at no more than the current $26 rate. That's right: you get this $8.95 book absolutely FREE if you take advantage of this offer *now*!

Stained Glass, by the way, is winner of an American Book Award, and the perfect example of *why* these Blackford Oakes novels have won such critical acclaim. They're much *more* than mere thrillers (only Bill Buckley would dare add all the other elements, marvelous stuff you won't find in anybody else's novels!). This one takes place some seven years after World War II (round about when Buckley himself was in the CIA . . .), and has plenty of action and a plot that will keep you guessing right up to the final pages. More, it really *does* involve stained glass, and what you learn will illuminate that fascinating art as do the windows themselves (i.e., you'll see it all from the inside).

Again, don't miss this opportunity to get this famous thriller *free*. Just use the card facing this page now.

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Tales of Padre Pio
By John McCaffrey
Doubleday/Image Books, 224 pp., $4.50

A REAL FOOTSTEP?

JOSEPH SOBRAN

On his first train ride to San Giovanni Rotondo, where Padre Pio the stigmatist lived, John McCaffrey met a young Italian who, it transpired, had been miraculously cured by Pio. "Miraculously" is almost an understatement. At the time of his cure, the Italian said, he had never heard of Pio. He was lying in his hospital bed near death from a lung disease when a bearded Capuchin friar appeared and laid a hand on his chest. The disease vanished. Later the young man saw a picture of Padre Pio and recognized him as the friar; he set out for San Giovanni to join the long lines of penitents waiting their turn to confess to this legendary man. Finally the young man entered the confessional, told his sins, was absolved. As he rose to leave, Pio's voice asked: "How are the lungs?"

As Pio stories go, this is small potatoes. Pio was, as far as I know, the most astounding man of this century. There are several books about him in English, of which this one, *Tales of Padre Pio*, is the only one by a mainstream publisher. The life, or at any rate the cult, would seem to warrant more attention.

The alleged facts are as follows. Francesco Forgione was born in southern Italy in 1887, ordained a Capuchin priest in 1910, died in 1968. There is no argument about that much.

Shortly after his ordination, he received the stigmata—the wounds of Christ—which bled profusely every day for the rest of his life. He told a priest of my acquaintance that he had to change his bandages seven times a day. The priest asked him whether the wounds hurt much. "They weren't given for fun, Father," Pio replied gently. "They were given for a purpose." Pio also bled weekly from stripes on his back like those of Christ's scourging. He ate only six hundred calories of food daily—not enough to sustain a normal person, let alone to replenish the blood he had lost.

According to all the literature about him, Pio could heal miraculously, exorcise devils (who attacked him physically to the end of his life), read minds, foretell the future, appear in several places at once, and perform odd prodigies like appearing in the sky to wave an American bomber pilot away from San Giovanni. He was accompanied by a fragrance of delicious sweetness which he could send abroad as a sign to those needing his aid. He lived a life of astonishing pain and charity.

There is no argument about that either, as far as I can tell. There is an enormous body of testimony, and it is unanimous. It is not refuted but ignored by those who would reject it. Progressive-minded people can revere a Bonhoeffer and pat a Mother Teresa on the head. But if Pio is for real, they're in big, big trouble. He makes Jerry Falwell seem like a secular humanist and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn a swinger by comparison.

Pio arouses envy even among a certain kind of Catholic, like the reviewer in one of the liberal Catholic papers who dismissed this book in a paragraph —"pious slush." The phrase proves he couldn't have read it. The author (who died last year) was a witty Irishman disinclined to write in hushed tones or to give anyone's testimony but his own. The tone of his *Tales* might be more accurately described as one of rowdy piety. John McCaffrey is no hagiographer but a Boswell, teasing and pricking his subject into revealing himself. On one occasion he so angered Pio that the saint pinned him against a wall and threatened him.

That is the great virtue of the book: there is more than one character in it, so you meet the saint in a living social network where you can measure him against others, rather than in isolated postures of holiness. McCaffrey gives color to the people Pio loved, and the book is extremely moving.

The miracles are nearly incidental; what really strikes you is Pio's person-

RANDOM NOTES

■ More April Titles: William Safire's *What's the Good Word?* (Times, $15.50) is the author's latest book on writing and talking good.

Joseph P. Lash has wrung a fourth book from his unique access to the Eleanor Roosevelt papers, this one called *Love, Eleanor: Eleanor Roosevelt and Her Friends* (Doubleday, $19.95): selected correspondence, of course. Unless you were one of the friends you will probably find this volume too much.

Stalin's Secret War (Holt, $17.95), by Nicholas Tolstoy, grandnephew of the novelist, is a fascinating story of Stalin's life between 1938 and 1945 in a self-created bunker, during which time he feared the collapse of the Soviet Union and his own poisoning and waged a "secret war" against his subjects.

In *The Second American Revolution: And Other Essays* (Random House, $15), Gore Vidal, the fetal Senate candidate, calls for a new Constitutional Convention summoned for the purpose of restoring the authority of Congress over the Executive Branch and the Supreme Court, mulls upon the humorlessness of Scott Fitzgerald, takes a slap at Edmund Wilson, beats up on Norman Podhoretz and Teddy Roosevelt, and generally has himself an all-around good time.

Will D. Campbell's novel *The Glad River* (Holt, $13.95) looks to be a very interesting book about three Southerners who meet in boot camp in 1942 and are sent to fight on Guadalcanal together, and who afterward meet at regular reunions until one of them is wrongfully booked on a rape-murder charge.

Stravinsky: Selected Correspondence, Volume I (Knopf, $27.50), edited and with commentaries by Robert Craft, is a very interesting compendium of letters written by the composer to Auden, Nadia Boulanger, Cocteau, and others in which, among other subjects, *Oedipus Rex*, *Orpheus*, and *The Rake's Progress* are adumbrated. You don't even have to like the music to be interested. —CW

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ality itself. Often it is playful; when an artist asked Pio to write an inscription on a forbiddingly stern portrait of him, he wrote, "Don't be afraid—it's only me." But he could be stern enough: women who exposed too much arm or shin were driven away, and a man who approached Pio to make a bad confession caused Pio to shout "PIG!!!" in a voice that shocked everyone in the church and drove the man scurrying out in shame. (In her book *Prophet of the People*, Dorothy Gaudiose quotes Pio as saying, "I never give them a candy when they need a cathartic.")

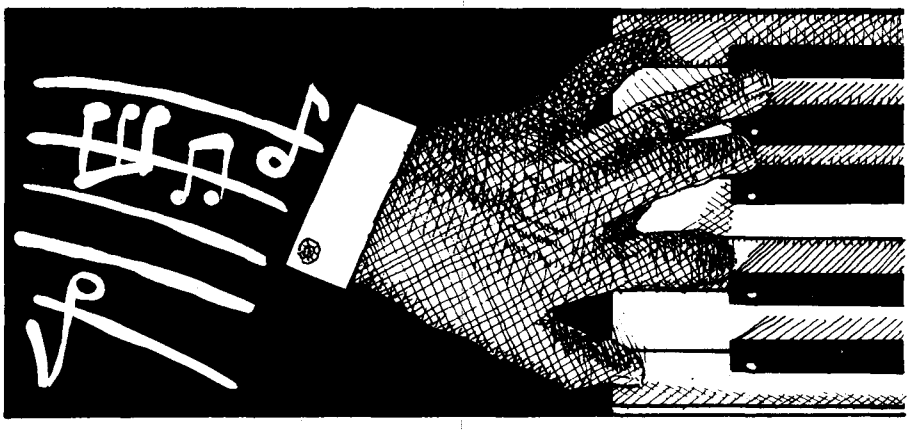
The most remarkable passage in the book is one that contains no miracle—only an intimate conversation with a holy man nearly broken by the death of a close friend. McCaffrey found Pio in such low spirits that he decided to provoke him to some lively emotion by any means possible. He remarked casually that all the adulation must have been hard on Pio's humility. This brought Pio to a flashpoint. "My humility!" he said, stunned. "My *humility*!" And he laughed uncontrollably at the grotesquerie of talking about his humility, rather as if McCaffrey had remarked that all the publicity must have been hard on his wife.

But then the conversation became deeply serious, concerning death and God's love. McCaffrey cited the view of the moral theologian Vermeersch that, contrary to popular opinion, holy men are more afraid at the moment of their death than wicked men. Pio listened, profoundly impressed; then ventured an opinion of his own, one that could hardly have occurred to anyone but a saint.

It's remarkable, in an age of publicity and sensationalism, that the sensational reports of Padre Pio's miracles have been so carefully passed over by the regnant publicists. The reason is probably that Pio's holiness was not susceptible to freak-show treatment. He shunned publicity, seldom even allowing private photographs of himself. His real life was lived in suffering and administering the sacraments, not in doing spectacular feats. We probably know only a tiny minority of the wonders he performed.

Beyond that, they are not a spectacle but a summons. The point was made by C. S. Lewis in his book *Miracles*:

> An "impersonal God"—well and good. A subjective God of beauty, truth, and goodness, inside our own heads—better still. A formless life-force surging through us, a vast power which we can tap—best of all. But God Himself, alive, pulling at the other end of the cord, perhaps approaching at an infinite speed, the hunter, king, husband—that is quite another matter. There comes a moment when the children who have been playing at burglars hush suddenly: was that a *real* footstep in the hall? There comes a moment when people who have been dabbling in religion ("Man's search for God"!) suddenly draw back. Supposing we really found Him? We never meant it to come to *that*! Worse still, supposing He had found us? □



SOUND ON DISC

JELLY ROLL REDIVIVUS

RALPH de TOLEDANO

He was born Ferdinand Le Menthe, a middle-class Creole in New Orleans, but to the world of jazz he would always be Jelly Roll Morton, Mr. Jelly Lord, or the Winin' Boy. He shocked his father by refusing to follow in his footsteps as a contractor and played piano in the honky-tonks and whorehouses of the Vieux Carré. Storyville was his turf before Josephus Daniels shut it down to protect the morals and the gonads of World War I sailors. When jazz pianists engaged in battles of music, he cut Tony Jackson, until then the greatest of them all.

That was Jelly Roll, the most colorful figure jazz has produced. Diamonds set in his front teeth and wearing $200 suits when $200 was more than a spit in the ocean, he ranged the country playing his music and taking side-trips into dubious business ventures that might have cost him his life. Vainglorious, boastful, certain of his place in jazz history, and gathering together some of the best New Orleans-style sidemen, he made his great records. And then he was forgotten. When Hugues Panassié wrote his pioneering *Le jazz hot* in the Thirties, he gave Jelly Roll part of a sentence, and that was all.

In 1938, when the jazz revival was passing him by, he wrote for *Downbeat* that "I discovered jazz in 1902"—one of the most modest statements he ever made about himself. For Jelly Roll Morton more than came upon jazz in the bulrushes. He was in at the creation—one of those like Louis Armstrong and Sidney Bechet and Jimmie Noone who were involved deeply in the synthesizing of jazz as we know it from the rags and the blues, the stomps and the worksongs, the musical *olla-podrida* that was New Orleans. He helped fuse the style and the performance of what had grown up in his native city with the musical product of the rest of the South, the nervous urban centers, and into what shone in the Golden Age of jazz—an expression old and new, black and white, and always uniquely American.

His life story was the life story of jazz, beginning before the turn of the century and riding into the Thirties and Forties—something that Alan Lomax recognized. When the tide of popular adulation passed him by, he sat with Lomax at the Library of Congress, a jug before him, playing and singing and talking the history of jazz and his own rich life. The instantaneous glass discs are there for the musicologist to study. They weren't interested then, and in those days you could comb the Harlem junk shops and the Salvation Army depots in vain looking for a scratched Jelly Roll record. But now this genius of jazz and ragtime and blues—pianist, arranger, bandleader, composer—has come into his own. Scott Joplin, acclaimed today, became famous for "his"

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"Memphis Blues," but the tune was no more than an amalgam of themes played by Jelly Roll and Tony Jackson —no sin, since Jelly Roll did some stealing of his own.

Jelly Roll died before the college boys and the musicologists caught up with him. His last recording date in 1938 caused a small flurry for its drive and verve and fidelity to the New Orleans spirit. But most of the jazz critics were too busy then exploring big-band swing and its effect on the urino-genital systems of jitterbugs to pay real attention to these last recordings. But we are fortunate. We can hear on records almost the entire repertory—the band sides, the trios, and the piano solos. Loving and respectful hands have brought them together for us in a neat package, where once upon a time we could find them one or two on an album not worth the saving.

The small-band recordings (issued during his lifetime as Jelly Roll Morton and his Red Hot Peppers) and the trio sides have been issued boxed by Blue Angel, a company that deals in compendia both jazz and classical. These seven LPs, frequently offering more than one take of a particular recording, run the full gamut. And they include that last and very exciting recording session. Because you may not find the album, *The Saga of Mr. Jelly Lord*, in most record shops, I give you the address: Blue Angel, 1738 Allied Street, Charlottesville, Va. 22901—price, $24.99. This is the real jazz, what we used to call the *righteous* jazz—the full-bodied voice of New Orleans music, long on solos, with some Jelly Roll arranging and some collective improvisation. Even those cuts made in 1926 have escaped the mark of time and the flat tone of acoustical recording. No jazz collection can be complete without this album.

The piano solos, though issued by a variety of companies, can be found on the Milestone label. They should dispel the fiction that ragtime was *sui generis*, blending as they move forward in time with barrelhouse and stride and the other "schools" of jazz piano. One of Jelly Roll's last dates, for the short-lived General Records, is also a gem. On these, Jelly Roll Morton sings and plays the old blues and rags pensively and warmly and demonstrates his complete mastery of the jazz keyboard. They were reissued on the Commodore label and can still be found, with the solos, in some record shops.

On all of these records, but particularly in the Blue Angel album, the grab will be at both intellect and emotion. The only jazz that compares with them are the Hot Five and Hot Seven recordings by Louis Armstrong. And they are, joyously, a part of the same legacy. □

DELECTATIONS

NOTES FROM A WINTER IN TUSCANY

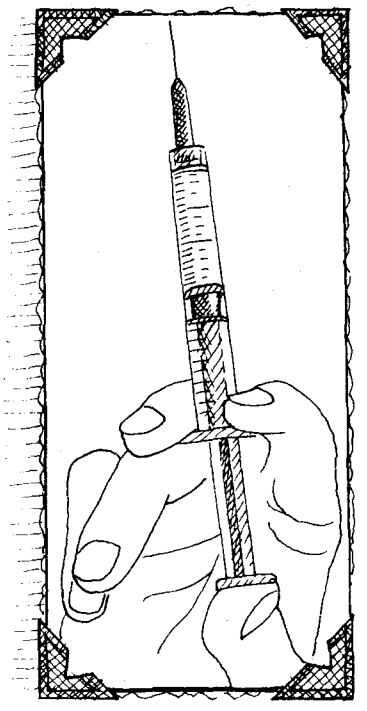
NIKA HAZELTON

The great cold began early in October, and the fields in the little valley that separates us from our village were white with frost in the morning. At last, the heating oil for the house, ordered early in June, arrived—enough to heat the four-room house for about three months. To do that cost us more than 900,000 lire, around $900 in our money—this to show you that keeping house in Tuscany is not cheap. True, Scotch costs about $3 less than in the United States; otherwise, food prices are the same if you are lucky, though generally you are not and find yourself paying at least a quarter more than in New York City, where I also keep house. And gas in Italy is $4 a gallon.

In all the years we have gone to our house in southern Tuscany, we have wondered what would happen if we needed a doctor in a hurry and what kind of doctor we would find in a little town not far from Perugia. To our delight, we found excellent doctors and specialists when we needed them last year. Arezzo was the nearest big town; here we found a superior heart doctor, equipped with cardiogram machines and all. And so very pleasant as well.

Italian medicine is socialized, and doctors offer free clinic service in the various villages once a week. If you don't want to wait in line, you can go to the doctor's office and pay; or, if you are disabled, he will come to your home. I had a very severe series of arthritic attacks, and the dear doctor came to the house and gave me the same kind of shots the great New York specialist gives me, at a considerably lower rate. He had to travel about fifty miles round trip, but he charged only the official rate, $35, which included the cost of the medicine. An equally kind male nurse drove about the same distance to give me a series of lesser shots, and charged even less.

Ever since Italy decentralized into Regions responsible for their own local affairs, many things have improved, at least in Tuscany. Specialists now visit the small-town hospitals from the nearby big towns, and patients are referred to city hospitals when necessary. I found it interesting to see how much



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more willing experienced Italian doctors are than American doctors to rely on their own diagnoses. I was also struck by the degree of personal kindness Italian patients expect, and receive, from their physicians, who explain everything, listening, sometimes for hours, to the patient's woes.

What is sadly lacking, however, is nursing care; there are nurses who provide specialized medical attentions, but all the other services have to be performed by the family. In Rome, Milan, Florence, and the other big cities there are fancy private clinics, but they are so expensive that even rich Italians go to Switzerland and Germany for any extensive medical care.

AMONG THE GREAT events in our village are marriages. It is customary here (not elsewhere in Tuscany, as far as I can make out) for the newlyweds to invite as many as two and even three hundred village people for a splendid dinner at a good restaurant; the guests are expected to arrive with envelopes containing anywhere from $20 to $50 per person, which they give to the hosts. This covers the cost of the dinners as well as the splendiferous photograph albums, and gives the couple a start on their honeymoon. It is not cheap to be a guest at a Tuscan wedding dinner, but then, as the village says: "You invite me and I invite you."

Wedding presents are given by intimates of the couple, and are of the general decorative-wedding-present nature: demitasse sets, crystal vases and bowls, and the like (but not silver, which would stick out in village surroundings). The menu is extensive, and one sits at the table for hours, eating, drinking, and toasting. The dinner begins with mixed *antipasti*, at least a dozen of them: cold cuts, *crostini* (little open tarts), and pickles. They are followed by four or five pasta dishes, roasts, boiled meats, roast game, birds (chicken, squab, pheasant in season), and, of course, rabbit, the Tuscan delicacy—all cooked with plenty of herbs and exquisite olive oil, and served with *contorni*, that is, potatoes and vegetables and salads. The meal is concluded by cheese, dessert—a cream or a rich meringue or similar dessert—and fruit. (Wedding cakes of the type we know do not exist, though a bride will cut an elaborate cake if she is a fancy bride.) Both red and white wine is served, and it flows plentifully; aperitifs precede the dinner and liqueurs follow, among them the invariable bitters and Scotch, which is served as an after-dinner drink. Some brides, of course, also serve champagne with the dessert.

All the wedding guests, including those who did not attend the dinner, are invited to a reception given afterward at the bride's house, with wine, sandwiches, and cakes. Everyone gets *i confetti*: little bonbonnières, holding a few sugared Jordan almonds—these are *de rigueur* at all Italian weddings. Bonbonnières range from ornate silver boxes (I received such a one at a ducal wedding) to simple little china animals (I once got a purple elephant at a simpler, humbler wedding).

The priest is always present at all these festivities—for free, I hasten to say—and shows up prominently in the wedding photographs, which are taken in the church, at the dinner table, in the house, in the garden—wherever a bride in full plumage and her groom and relatives would look good. □

The GIMLET EYE

POLAND AND THE LEFT

D. KEITH MANO

Town Hall: liberalism is making a technical rally here. Sort of like the way corpses fill with gas. Radical pitchmen mill around outside, hawking literature printed on two-pound, instantly biodegradable paper. This could be stock footage from 1971. There are, I think, more left-wing sects now and fewer left-wing people: American ultra-liberalism has begun to break up like the transmission on a motel TV. Syndical-Trotskyists are overruling their Socialist Labor competition. The Spartacist Neo-Luddite has snubbed two Anarcho-Menshevik women. One idiot, whose party line must've been laid down by a road grader, tells us that we must "Stop this CIA-Vatican-labor front in Poland."

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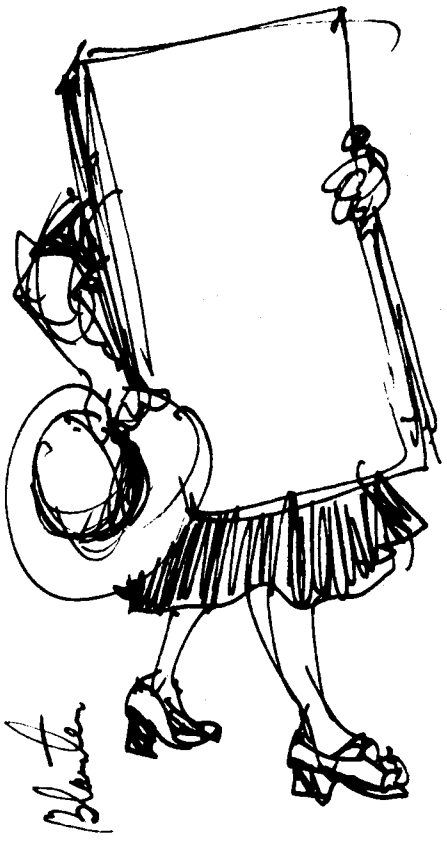
Madness and misdirection, some panic: Poland, for the Left, is becoming another Hitler-Stalin Pact.

Town Hall: where once Jane Fonda and the Rosenberg children and Angela Davis gave me spiritual toxic-shock syndrome. Ah, I have nostalgia for that period: certainly it was no rough grind to fetch a conservative column up back then. And in 1982 they've taken the place over again, these anti-alumni of Vietnam—Seeger, Vidal, Hentoff, Ginsberg, Vonnegut, Sontag: each of these faces launched a thousand boat people at least. Now they're busy partitioning Poland yet another time.

How many Poles does it take to screw up one Soviet Communist regime? A lot. A lot. Poles have become chic as leg warmers: no longer a joke people who make flammable ashtrays, who need full job retraining after each coffee break. The American Left is horny: it would like to lay a hot thigh over Poland. Solidarity, after all, is something worth getting your picture taken with. Polish workers, despite their un-Marxist Catholicism, look more like *workers* than any other national type. Lech Walesa, heck, has a Sacco and Vanzetti mustache on. But having ratified, since 1945 or so, the Communist mannikin status of Poland, left-flingers get no strong Trendex rating in Warsaw. To romance Solidarity will require some quick readjustment: Reagan and the Right might otherwise make Gdansk a political-emotional pocket borough. And how is this to be achieved? Well, there are several ways, any of which could rupture a small vein behind the moral retina.

TAKE Ralph Schoenman, our moderator, for instance. Schoenman has a cloven face: he seems gravid with malice and cunning. Poland, you see, is "subject to the most harsh repression in the name of an oligarchy increasingly isolated and utterly without credit." *Oligarchy*: get that one. Nobody here but us rich guys, Nelson Brezhnev and J. Paul Jaruzelski. "So we pose the question, when concerned with oligarchy, who then can speak for workers in Poland?" Not Reagan. Not you or me of course. When faced with overt Soviet tyranny, just distort language until it becomes dull as a loofah glove.

Or Gore Vidal. Vidal, whose large intestine still debouches at his mouth, will ignore the issue perfectly. Never mind Poland: since World War II America



has been worse occupied, "occupied by the military-industrial-political complex." How's that for a neologism?

Or Pete Seeger, who by now has provided the guitar accompaniment for one half-century of irresponsible politics. Seeger will perform a Yiddish folk tune: he might be singing about oligarchy, far as I know.

Or Daniel Singer, the "John Reed of Poland." Singer will try to be pragmatic. "When the workers, rising above their immediate demands, presented their own interests as the superior revolutionary interests of society as a whole—that came straight from the pages of Marx. But, but—if I went on to say that therefore it was the work of conscious revolutionary Marxists, I would be a liar. I would prefer them to sing the Internationale. But . . . if your jailers sing the Internationale, would you sing the Internationale? If we allow the Reagans and Thatchers to convince the people of Eastern Europe that the only socialism is panzer socialism—then we shall bear a heavy responsibility for the future of our own movement."

Or Susan Sontag. Well, SS is another affair entirely. Worth a whole "Gimlet Eye." Keep your channel selector tuned to this spot.

Then in one halting, simple, so declarative sentence, Vidal and Schoenman and Singer are confounded. A Polish worker direct from Gdansk has been given the dais. He doesn't speak English well: he cannot, therefore, know how he is being manipulated here. But he can tell why Communism won't ever function as an economic and social program. "You see," he says, "with Communism, when you work harder you don't get any more money." Aha! So that's it, Schoenman. That's it, Singer. Never mind from each according to his ability, to each according to his need or greed. To *me*, according to the damned manhours I put in. Which is as it should be.

And all at once I don't give a whore's hello for this velleity: the rush, from left or right, to represent Poland. We'll leave Town Hall in time for *Saturday Night Live*: we'll kill an asteroid or two with the children before bed. With such advocates you won't beat jury duty, let alone Brezhnev. What could the price of bread mean to an American: can you tell me how much Arnold Toasting White costs today? I've seen film on Poland. The Catholic Mass is fierce there: it seems what first it was—a last supper. They reverently wolf their Eucharist down: the price even of consecrated bread may go up tomorrow. Poles, like a human tongue, live in constant jeopardy. I mean, imagine being partitioned by Hitler and Stalin at the same moment: a handsome course load that must have been. Katyn Forest doesn't surprise me, though: Russia has always feared contamination by the Polish spirit. And it is time that we—conniving liberal or righteous conservative—let them go free. Free not to be an instance, a conclusion drawn in our petty quarrels. They have enough on their bare plate now. Anyway, there is sufficient honor and courage in Poland, even at a remove, to ennoble us all. □

BOOKS IN BRIEF

SELECTED LETTERS OF JAMES THURBER, *edited by Helen Thurber and Edward Weeks (Little, Brown, 269 pp., $15).* There is a tendency to treat James Thurber as a literary figure rather than as a humorist like Robert Benchley or S. J. Perelman. In the literary pantheon, Thurber will get a full-bodied statue instead of just a head, to judge from the stir created by the publication of his letters. As meticulously written and as funny as his magazine prose, the

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Dark Horses

CHILTON WILLIAMSON JR.

It is fashionable these days to make fun of the Reagan Administration's jerry-built, do-it-yourself, instant-weight-loss, shake-'n'-bake policies, and to attack it for its willingness to experiment with new, wholly untested formulae. This sort of talk is intellectually satisfying to assistant professors, TV journalists, endangered Democrats, and Carl Rowan; but serious students of American politics, as well as hoarier citizens of the Republic, will recall that it was precisely that daring, that venturesomeness, for which the sainted Franklin Roosevelt was praised by liberals in the Thirties.

Then it was fashionable to argue that whether the New Deal made good sense or bad at least the President was *doing* something—that action *had* to be better than stasis. Then, indeed, it was fashionable to stress the degree to which the theoretical underpinnings of the Administration's policies were *brand new—the latest word—hot from the studies of Harvard intellectuals.* Since then, of course, liberals have lost their capacity to be thrilled by the new, the adventurous: and so today they shiver with horror when they think of the Republican Party running the country on a theory scribbled by Arthur Laffer on a cocktail napkin.

Nevertheless, a small volume entitled *Essays in Supply-Side Economics* (The Institute for Research on the Economics of Taxation, The Heritage Foundation, 513 C Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002; $5.95), edited by David G. Raboy, makes the case for an intellectual pedigree far longer and distinguished by far better bloodlines than that of the Keynesianism that the modern democratic West has come to think of simply as Economics. Individually and in concert the contributors to this book demonstrate conclusively that supply-side economics is not a gimmick foisted upon the country by promoters and snake-oil sellers, but a body of what Raboy describes as "evolving economic thought" that can be traced back to Adam Smith and that is really little more than neoclassical theory applied to latter-day public policy.

Raboy argues, in his essay "The Theoretical Heritage of Supply-Side Economics," that to be a supply-sider you do not need to abhor monetarism and Milton Friedman or to believe that taxation is the root of all economic evil. What you probably do think is that the market is a stable mechanism because the laws of supply and demand force markets to clear; that the market adjusts rather quickly to price changes; that the economy is generally in a state of equilibrium; that individuals and corporations behave rationally and in ways that maximize their positions; and that they react in certain ways to the prospect of post-tax rewards.

Raboy's lucid survey explains the consistency of these notions with the writings of Smith, Say (who did *not* state that any production generates its *own* demand, as Keynes interpreted him, but simply that it generates *demand*), Menger, Pareto, Marshall, and others. Arguing that supply-side economics agrees with neoclassical economics that economic decisions occur at the margins of economic activity, he remarks that its ideas are "readily accepted in university teaching on the micro level."

Richard E. Wagner's "The Enterprise System, Democracy, and the General Welfare: An Approach to Reconciliation" is also worthy of special notice. Wagner argues that democracy and the market economy are "not inherently reconciled with the general welfare." A market economy, he says, is a wealth-enhancing system, largely because it promotes a consensus on the use of resources. ". . . Democracy can be said to be wealth-enhancing rather than wealth-eroding to the extent that its institutions are consensual rather than majoritarian. . . . Wealth enhancement will come to dominate wealth erosion to the extent that the particular institutions of democracy come to reflect in one way or another the features of ownership and contract." □

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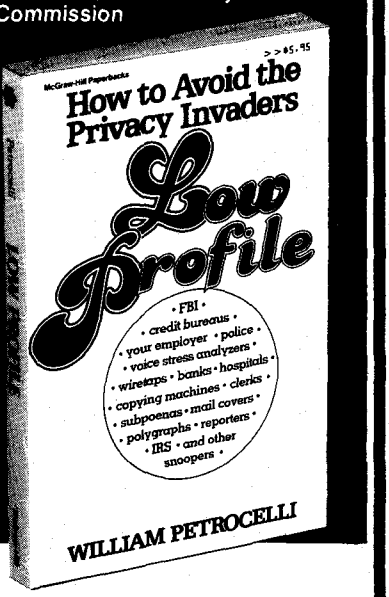
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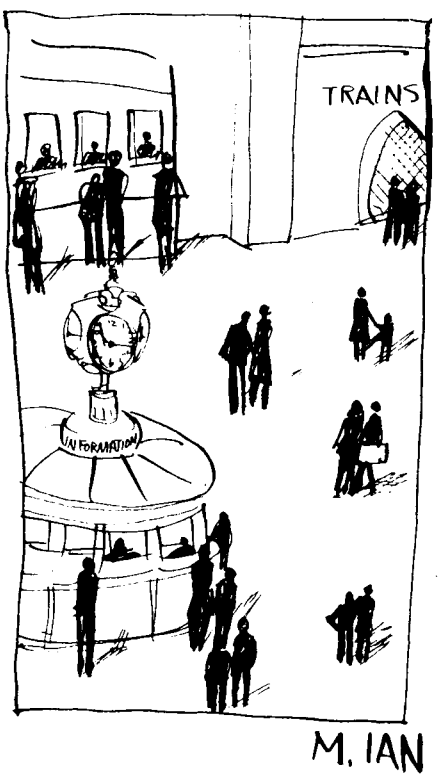
Selected Letters are confined in subject to the familiar classics of the Thurber domain. He studies *The New Yorker*'s use of the comma; he hilariously unrolls the horrors of playwriting for Wolcott Gibbs; he records (invents?) his cook's malapropistic way with words: "Margaret . . . says one of her sons works into the incinerating plant where they burn the refuge; has had the job since the Armitage. . . . You begin to feel insane after an hour or so of this. Margaret lost only one child. . . . I asked what carried the girl off and Margaret said, 'Tuberculosis. She got it from her teeth. Went all through her symptom.'" Arranged according to the person to whom they were sent and in very rough chronological order, the letters are mostly to old friends, many of them writers: the Whites, John O'Hara, Kenneth Tynan. Thurber's correspondence with H. L. Mencken and T. S. Eliot was too thin, it seems, to be included. (Eliot, an early and ardent admirer of Thurber's, sent him clippings from British newspapers with headlines like "TWO BITTEN BY APE." Thurber, whose appreciation for Eliot was only lukewarm, reported their only meeting in his letters by noting that Eliot smoked Kools.) In putting together this collection the editors, Helen Thurber and Edward Weeks, have sacrificed biographical genuineness in the putative interests of producing an entertaining book. They have elided much of Thurber's self-doubt and querulosity, traces of his adulterous libido, antisemitism, anti-Communism, and other social gaucheries. While most of the omissions are justifiable, the editorial exigencies behind others are vague. Why, for instance, was the earliest letter to be included written in 1935, when Thurber was 41? He had by that time already been at *The New Yorker* for eight years and was about to embark on his second marriage, to Helen Thurber. The editors' decision to exclude Thurber's dazzling, if self-protective, anti-Communist letters to Malcolm Cowley is also questionable. Sample: "I read all kinds of threats and prophecies of disaster, but I have not put my eye yet on a succinct statement of just what it is that the Communists, or the socialists in this country want. Where can I go to find out what they want? . . . If it all came out the way Gold [a "proletarian" writer] wants it, and everything is hotsy-totsy, then would it be all right for a Lardner or a Wilder or a *New Yorker* writer to write what he wanted to write or wouldn't it?" As historical documentation of New York's literary milieu of the time, these letters are extraordinary. Their slight difference in tone from other letters in the volume could have been accommodated easily by the book's arrangement in chapters. But despite these complaints, the editors have done an excellent job of editing and shaping the letters into an extremely diverting book. Buy it: read it: enjoy it. For letters not included in this collection, go to Burton Bernstein's authorized biography, at least 20 per cent of which consists of letters. MARY SCHWARZ

THE HERMITAGE JOURNALS, *by John Howard Griffin (Andrews & McMeel, 231 pp., $15).* John Howard Griffin, author of the disturbing *Black like Me*, was a converted Catholic who was entrusted with writing the biography of Thomas Merton. Griffin, who died in 1980, never completed the project, but we now have, in this volume, the journal he kept of his 18 visits to the Gethsemani Abbey in Kentucky, to be followed in the near future by Michael Mott's own, authorized biography. *The Hermitage Journals* is one of the most sensitive books I have had the pleasure to read in the past five years—a congeries of incisive meditations on the spiritual life, on politics, on God, that blatantly contradicts the image we wish to keep of arch-conservative Texans. There is no bigotry, no jingoism, no braggadocio in this "last testament" by Griffin. The journals are a subdued, if firm, exposure of prejudice and fanaticism. They poke fun at our fossilized view of religion and at our callousness toward the weak and downtrodden, at unnatural practices of virtue and self-righteous stigmatization of vices; but they are fundamentally a rumination on the mystery of the Christ of silences. Far from the rush of time, in the quiet of the abbey, Griffin engages in an attempt to relive Merton's experience of "total nakedness before God." He immerses himself in solitude, letting the peaceful surroundings envelop him, doing what Merton had done before him every day: he washes, he chops wood, he cooks breakfast, he dusts, he prays: but there's no difference between mopping the floor and elevating one's thoughts to God. Actions are "rituals" which prove that God is in all things, in the simple works performed daily. The painful clash between body and soul, so typical of medieval asceticism, is resolved at Gethsemani Abbey by Griffin's renewed faith in the goodness of creation. NEREO E. CONDINI



NIGHT CREATURE: *A Journal of Jazz, 1975-1980, by Whitney Balliett (Oxford, 285 pp., $15.95).* Whitney Balliett, jazz critic for *The New Yorker* since 1957, has long been regarded by his colleagues as the best in the business—an informed amateur with a poet's ear, whose writing captures the essence of jazz with elegance and economy. His latest collection, *Night Creature*, brings together pieces written between 1975 and 1980; of obvious interest to jazz listeners, it also has much to offer those who simply appreciate fine prose, whatever the subject. The articles in *Night Creature*, arranged chronologically, alternate between commentaries on live performances and profiles of individual players, spaced by an occasional book or record review. As usual, the profiles—always a Balliett specialty—are the book's strong point. Some are sharply etched cameos hung on a record review (Nat Cole) or a recent death (Erroll Garner), while some (Zoot Sims, Benny Goodman) are full-dress productions built around an interview; all are enlivened by Balliett's masterly knack for conveying personality, style, and tone of voice within the space of a few precisely observed paragraphs, something no one at *The New Yorker* does better. Balliett is not a trained musician, and his gentleman-critic stance does backfire from time to time. (No serious scholar, for example, would ever have called James Lincoln Collier's inept *The Making of Jazz* "shrewd and graceful and funny.") One reads Balliett for things other than meticulous scholarship, though, and such things are present in glittering abundance on every page of *Night Creature*. Indeed, two pages in particular are themselves worth the price of admission: page 45, which contains a flawless pen-and-ink sketch of Buddy Rich in meditation, fully worthy of Sem or Beerbohm; and page 98, where Balliett neatly describes pianist Dave McKenna as having saluted Art Tatum one evening with "a couple of fifty-foot arpeggios," and then compares a Mary Lou Williams-Cecil Taylor concert to a literary shootout between James Gould Cozzens and Nathalie Sarraute. Writing like that is hard to find and harder to better.

TERRY TEACHOUT

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KESLER

(Continued from page 351)

Kristol's recurrence to the "inherited values" of the Judaeo-Christian will not do, Jaffa said, for "inherited values" *qua* values are subjective, are "inherently relative to the evaluating subject." Besides, what is ours by inheritance alone can in itself have no moral claim on the rest of mankind.

Nonsense! Why?

As a further illustration of the weakness of Kristol's position, Jaffa adverted to Kristol's dismissal of some of the "human rights" invented in United Nations resolutions—the right to vacations with pay, maternity leave, free medical care, and so forth—as "nonsense" agreed to by the American Government "in its moments of silliness." These things *are* nonsense, Jaffa declared, but Kristol is unable to tell us *why* they are nonsense. The reason is that while free medical care and a proper diet may be desirable means to the ends of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, the "number of things that human beings regard as desirable is infinite," and the "resources to gratify those desires are finite." To call anything desirable for human happiness a "human right" is to confuse means with ends; it makes these desirable means into ends-in-themselves that the government has the categorical duty to provide, rather than permitting them, *qua* means, to be the subjects of deliberation and practical wisdom.

It is often the case that the private sector can supply these needs much better than the public sector. That, however, is a decision of prudence that cannot be known *a priori*. To debase human rights by transmuting anything desirable into a "right" implies that scarcity—as a permanent part of the human condition requiring us to rank means in relation to ends—can be overcome. It implies, Jaffa concluded, the "leap into freedom" that marks the end of history and the beginning of the Communist "heaven on earth." Shorn from their foundation in nature, "human rights," whether begrudged by the Right or trumpeted by the Left, strengthen instead of weakening, honor instead of shaming the forces of despotism in the modern world.

It was then Wolin's turn to reply, but he pleaded *nolo contendere*, and, after spirited questions from the audience, the conference was over. Among its lessons, two stand out: If the conservative intellectual movement does not know what it is *for*—does not acknowledge the principles of the Fathers as *its* principles—then it cannot really know *why* it is against what it is against. And if conservatism does not stand for the principles of the Founding Fathers, no one else will. □

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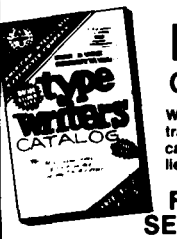

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LEONARD E. READ:

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Bucks vs. Barbarism

JOHN P. ROCHE

Boston—If you examine the structural division among liberal and conservative commentators on American foreign policy, an interesting pattern emerges. The liberals are basically divided between the descendants of Henry Wallace and the heirs of Harry Truman and Dean Acheson. The conservatives too suffer from a split personality: there the ideological anti-Communists encounter the hard-nosed capitalists, the characters who aren't interested in Soviet barbarism but in Soviet bucks.

The liberal quandary can be put aside for the moment, except to note the strange love affair between the Henry Wallace family and the capitalist rope salesmen. Revisionist historians, who look on the cold war as one vicious American conspiracy after another against peace-loving Soviets, seem to have a special affinity for "enlightened" capitalists such as the late Cyrus Eaton. There is some sentiment that our Export-Import Bank should loan Moscow the money to buy the rope Lenin once said capitalists would compete to sell to Bolsheviks—the rope to hang capitalists.

Once you assume the conservatives have this split, a number of our current foreign policies become explicable if not coherent. The ideological anti-Communists look at the world as being locked in a struggle between Marxism-Leninism and freedom, believe this is a total war, and see no basis for giving aid and comfort to the enemy. They write one draft of a Reagan speech.

THE HUNGRY entrepreneurs, who look on all ideology as something Madison Ave. flacks cook up to order, are in fact Marxist models. You sometimes have the eerie feeling they have read *Kapital* so they can act and dress the part to perfection. They are interested in profits and would doubtless sell coking coal to the Devil if the price was right. A while back a highly paid consultant told them to improve their image, to rent a political theory.

This was not hard: they found some historians and political scientists who (quite sincerely) believed in the "Fat Communist" thesis. The gist of this was that Communists were driven to beastliness by deprivation and poverty, that fattening Communists would lead them to behave in a civilized fashion. Indeed, some argued that there would be a sort of technological epiphany when fat Communists and fat capitalists converged. They share a distaste for free trade unions.

There is nothing new about this premise: in the 1930s, when democratic socialists urged that trade to Nazi Germany, Italy, and Japan be embargoed until they behaved as peaceful world citizens, they were told an embargo was a warlike act. Once the Japanese, for example, became dependent upon American petroleum and scrap iron, it would be impossible for Tokyo to contemplate hostilities with the United States.

In fact, the opposite was the case. Once the Japanese became dependent upon American products, notably gasoline, they felt highly vulnerable. When we began cutting back on exports, and finally in the summer of 1941 virtually turned off the oil tap, Tokyo felt driven to precipitate economic self-defense measures. Remember Pearl Harbor?

Wasn't it Lord Keynes who said that if you owed the bank a hundred pounds, you had a problem; if you owed the bank a million pounds, it had the problem? This is a summary of the present financial balance between Western governments and banks on the one hand and the Soviets on the other. They owe us a fortune, but what's a debt got to do with foreign policy?

Thus there is pressure not to demand payment, even of interest, and to subsidize the natural-gas pipeline from Siberia to Germany and the European Community. Presumably, happy Communists would never be nasty to good customers, or those who in a spirit of Christian charity forgive their debtors. One of these missionaries also prepares a draft speech for President Reagan.

This is a somewhat biased presentation, but we of the Truman-Acheson foreign-policy clan have a great deal in common with the conservative ideological anti-Communists: we know a dedicated enemy when we see one, and don't plan to countersign our own death warrants.

Our problem with them has always been over their fixation on economics. They think Marxism-Leninism is some kind of noxious economic doctrine designed to replace free enterprise with egalitarianism. We think it is ideological gangsterism designed to eliminate freedom of all sorts, a system which is as profoundly anti-egalitarian as it is anti-free-enterprise.

However, these differences are marginal to our common concern that as long as the Reagan Administration allocates every other day, or every other paragraph, to the rope salesmen, our sense of national purpose will continue to be Jimmy Carter's "national malaise." □

PERSPECTIVE ON THE YOUNG

Boston—I was talking with a group of my students about the recent surge of anti-Vietnam revivalism in the Boston area. Characters who haven't made the TV screen in a decade have dusted off their old speeches and hit the college circuit trying to ignite the student masses. Also there is money in anti-Americanism: typically, a handful of student activists on a campus get control of the student activities fee, and payoffs to their heroes can be substantial.

All this pentecostal activity has an Aesopian purpose: the listeners are supposed to substitute Salvador for Vietnam. The student response is hardly overpowering. Some of the circuit-riders, notably a pro-Communist Vietnamese, can clear a hall faster than tear gas. The squalid aspect is how few of the Americans involved seem to feel any responsibility for the Asian Auschwitz that ensued in Indochina when we abandoned it to Hanoi.

My students, a bright lot, were interested in getting a broader perspective. Thus one inquired, "What about the secret bombing of Cambodia? How could that be justified?" My answer was that I was not a divinely appointed Spokesman for Truth; they would have to decide for themselves whether it was right or wrong. But I could tell them, first, that the bombing was not "secret," and second, the grounds on which it was justified.

Then I ran into myself in the revolving door: "What do you mean it wasn't 'secret'?" a young man asked. "It is always referred to as 'secret.'" "Don't you remember?"—I said glibly—"Bill Beecher blew the whole business wide open in a

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Times article in May 1969, and a week or so later the *Wall Street Journal* did another big feature." I went on about how this led President Nixon and his NSC assistant, Henry Kissinger, to start the whole bugging and plumbing enterprise.

They were listening intently but looking at me curiously. Which led to the moment of truth: they couldn't "remember" all this. They were not yet in their teens when it happened. They were very nice about it and we all had a good laugh, but the episode set me meditating on one of the central problems of teaching. Because your students are always roughly the same age, you lose track of the calendar.

Thirty-five years ago this spring, when I met my first class as a graduate instructor in Government at Cornell, most students were coevals: veterans studying under the GI Bill to whom you could casually say, "You remember how the Nazis double-crossed the Russians in 1941," and they would nod. Indeed, about now, 35 years ago, we were arguing the merits of the Truman Doctrine.

Some faculty get caught in the illusion of agelessness: in the late 1960s we saw a mass search among my peers for the Fountain of Youth. I didn't know whether to laugh or cry as these victims of the Ponce de Leon Complex begged their bemused students to inspire them with new wisdom.

If you avoid the perils of perpetual precocity, it is intriguing to look at the flow of students and ask yourself, "What about the widely proclaimed collapse of American values?" To do this honestly, you have to purge your own memory of self-serving elements, exorcise all that "golden age" nonsense. I hear a lot of men my age pontificating on the immorality of the young. But friends, watch it; we went to school and war together, and I have a good memory.

The first thing to put into the computer is the scale factor: in 1940 there were about 12 million young Americans in the 15 to twenty age bracket, of whom 9 per cent went to college. By 1982, the total had almost doubled, and over 12 million continued their education. This is the showcase category. The behavior of college students is, rightly or wrongly, taken as a prime morality index.

As I have watched—at Cornell in the Forties, Haverford in the Fifties, Brandeis in the Sixties, and Fletcher currently—there have never seemed to be the great shifts widely advertised. The students in the Fifties were not torpid, any more than their maligned counterparts are in the Eighties. And the students of the Sixties and early Seventies were not, in mass, radical, screaming druggies. The numbers skew perception.

CCNY was a great radical center in the Thirties, and I doubt if the percentage of radicals there was lower than the similar figure at Berkeley, or Columbia, in the Sixties. But 5 per cent of five thousand fills a small auditorium, 5 per cent of 35,000 is a riot. In the Eighties, as in the Forties and Sixties, most students mind their own business, work hard, and in general are no less moral, patriotic, and God-fearing than their parents. Can we ask for more? □

THE MENACE OF ABSTRACTIONS

Boston—About a month or so ago I chanced to hear a talk on Central America by an eminent intellectual who considers himself a political prophet. It was a doomsday message: as dominoes crashed in the background, the Marxist-Leninists moved to destroy our power in the Caribbean. Afterward I asked him if I should go home, get my M-1 carbine, and volunteer for Armageddon. He said I misunderstood him: he wasn't advocating a "military commitment."

This is a type I unfortunately know too well: they consider a decisive stand against evil to involve all steps short of action. Then, if the going gets rough, they jump ship, saying, "I never supported a military solution; we should have looked for a political answer." A delightful proposal, but in most such cases only military action can make a political solution possible.

Back in 1966-67, for example, there was a strong American lobby demanding aid for Biafran independence. Biafra, a breakaway attempt from Nigeria by the largely Roman Catholic Ibo tribe, was systematically getting the chop from the Nigerian army. Among those leading the pro-Biafran chorus in the United States was Senator Edward Kennedy.

One of the Senator's aides called me at the White House asking what could be done to guarantee that food shipments would get through the Nigerian blockade. I said that perhaps the Senator could get a congressional resolution urging the President to station a carrier in the Bay of Benin to provide fighter escort for planes running the blockade. He said the Senator would never support military action. "In that case," I replied, "send a wreath."

This was not a cold-hearted statement, but a summary of simple reality. I have serious reservations about an American policy on Africa which ignores tribal brutality among blacks or between blacks and Asians, but focuses on the wickedness of the white tribe. My perception of tribal barbarism is color-blind. But in 1966-67 the only leverage that could have worked on the Nigerian government was military.

The nice thing about the intellectual world is that abstractions are so malleable. Recently Norman Mailer noted he felt guilty for helping release Jack Abbott, the convicted killer, on the world. Abbott had impressed Mailer with his vivid descriptions of convict violence, but they were considered only words. Mailer has presumably now decided there is some relation between words and actions, but Abbott's dead victim, Richard Adan, has paid for his education.

One might think an intellectual would begin with the premise that words have meaning and consequences. About a decade ago Allen Ginsberg, an alleged poet, was doing a Howl through the West. After a TV show he asked his interrogator whether he liked "Howl" and Ginsberg's other work, and the guy said he thought they were lousy. Ginsberg casually called him an obscene name, the chap then decked Ginsberg, and the latter, on the floor rubbing his chin, observed mournfully, "But they were only words." Can you think of a better epitaph for a poet?

My eccentricity is a belief that not only must one have the courage of one's convictions, but also the courage of their consequences. This means that when some well-meaning patriot sounds the trumpet and shouts "Charge!" my immediate reaction is to study the options, not jump on my horse. This risks accusations of cowardice—in 1961 several of Jack Kennedy's intellectual heavies accused me of poltroonery because I couldn't find a domino standing in Laos.

A couple of years later, they couldn't find it either and shortly signed off on our whole Southeast Asian commitment. In the process they denounced me as a mad militarist because I supported the defense of South Vietnam, where there was a domino, however shaky, and an accessible coastline. Small things in the abstract world, but crucial if you are going to mount an effective defense against aggression.

To formulate an intelligent posture toward a world full of wolves it is essential to cut through the mists of abstraction. A three-column analysis of current problems in Zimbabwe can still be obsessed with the question whether President Robert Mugabe is a more dedicated Marxist-Leninist than opposition leader Joshua Nkomo. Mugabe is a dedicated Shona, Nkomo is a dedicated Matabele, and the two tribes have been at daggers drawn for centuries!

Last month Susan Sontag horrified the New York intelligentsia by saying that a *Reader's Digest* fan would learn more about the true nature of Communism than a reader of *The Nation*; I would add that the infantryman who fears that truth "comes in six- and nine-round bursts" is closer to reality than most intellectuals. □

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The Awful Truth about Reagan

On The Right

New York, March 5—If you have been out of the country for a few weeks, you will have forgotten that some of the media proceed as though their national sponsor were the Democratic National Committee. Certainly, judging from a single broadcast, one would guess that the Democrats have secretly purchased NBC, if Miss Jessica Savitch, the anchorlady last Saturday night, is an example. There cannot have been a higher congestion of implausibilities and distortions than those she relayed in two or three minutes devoted to the theme of how, under Reagan, the rich are exploiting the poor.

NBC had some nice lines there to choose from, but my favorite was the one about how people earning $10,000 per year are going to endure a greater diminution of benefits than those earning $80,000 a year. How much more? Three times.

An outrage.

Sometimes one has the feeling that it is unconstitutional to think when one listens to the evening news, but at the risk of committing that offense, one might ask: Why isn't it, not three to one, but one hundred to one? Or one thousand to one? Because we should, really, Democrats and Republicans alike, agree on the proposition that people making $80,000 per year shouldn't receive any welfare measures from the taxpayer. As to the reduction in welfare aid to the $10,000 family, one would need to know just what form it took, before becoming indignant. If, for instance, that loss was $100 worth of food stamps, but was offset by an increase of $350 in purchasing power due to a slowdown of inflation, why that should be okay, shouldn't it?

Then Miss Savitch announced that tax breaks for a family earning $10,000 amounted to $120, while tax breaks for a person earning $80,000 came to $15,000. If you stare at those figures for a mere thirty seconds or so, you find, don't you, that it's as though someone had dropped a cake of mud in your in-built little computer (we all have these, and they come in very handy). Surely that can't be *exactly* right?

So the next morning you look at the entire report Miss Savitch was alluding to, and does it tell you that you will receive $15,000 tax relief at $80,000? No it doesn't. It says that the *average* tax relief to be received by everyone receiving $80,000 or more will come to $15,000. Well, forget what the tax relief would be to Nelson Rockefeller or H. L. Hunt, *how much would it be to someone who earns $80,000?* Answer: $4,500. Already this year? Well, no. Next year? No. The third year. What would a single person earning $80,000 be paying in taxes? Answer: $23,470. So what is his net relief? Answer: About 15 per cent. Is that scandalous? I don't think so, which doesn't matter. What does matter is that probably NBC's listeners wouldn't think so either if they were given a chance to have the facts, other than as distorted by Miss Savitch and NBC's news department.

But so it goes. I was in Kansas City the other day and read a report by one Michael Kilian of the Knight-Ridder newspapers, and I thought for a while he was writing about Mussolini; but no, it was of course Reagan, the man who carried 44 states of the Union at the last election by saying he would do what he is now doing —except for balancing the budget; which if he did balance it, by reducing federal expenditures, the gentlepersons of Kansas City would be reading from Mr. Kilian not a description of Mussolini, but of Hitler.

Here is his lead: "The Republican Party must come to realize that it faces a threat in 'the Reagan Revolution' far greater than the Watergate debacles and possibly as devastating as 'the Hoover Depression.' The radical changes and assaults upon institutions, the hard economic times, perceived cruelty, and ideological thuggery that have come to characterize this nominally Republican and supposedly conservative Administration have alienated, offended, or frightened Americans by the millions. The prospect is for a sound GOP thrashing this November and a Republican catastrophe in 1984."

Perceived cruelty and ideological thuggery, wow. The last time a major political party faced a catastrophe was the Democrats in 1980. One wonders what Mr. Kilian or Miss Savitch diagnosed as the cause of it? There's a lot of bad news in the world, but the good news is that, by and large, for all their lapses and infidelities, the American people are so very much smarter than the hysterical types who try to tell them what to think. □

AYN RAND, RIP

New York, March 10—Ayn Rand is dead. So, incidentally, is the philosophy she sought to launch dead; it was in fact stillborn. The great public crisis in Ayn Rand's career came, in my judgment, when Whittaker Chambers took her on—in December of 1957, when her book *Atlas Shrugged* was dominating the best-seller list, lecturers were beginning to teach something called Randism, and students started using such terms as "mysticism of the mind" (religion), and "mysticism of the muscle" (statism). Whittaker Chambers, whose authority with American conservatives was as high as that of any man then living, wrote in NATIONAL REVIEW, after a lengthy analysis of the essential aridity of Miss Rand's philosophy, "Out of a lifetime of reading, I can recall no other book in which a tone of overriding arrogance was so implacably sustained. Its shrillness is without reprieve. Its dogmatism is without appeal."

I had met Miss Rand three years before that review was published. Her very first words to me (I do not exaggerate) were: "You ahrr too intelligent to believe in Gott." The critic Wilfrid Sheed once remarked, when I told him the story, "Well, that certainly is an icebreaker." It was; and we conversed, and did so for two or three years. I used to send her postcards in liturgical Latin: but levity with Miss Rand was not an effective weapon. And when I published Whittaker Chambers's

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review, her resentment was so comprehensive that she regularly inquired of all hosts or toastmasters whether she was being invited to a function at which I was also scheduled to appear, because if that was the case, either she would not come; or, if so, only after I had left; or before I arrived. I fear that I put the lady through a great deal of choreographical pain.

Miss Rand's most memorable personal claim (if you don't count the one about her being the next greatest philosopher after Aristotle) was that since formulating her philosophy of "objectivism," she had never experienced any emotion for which she could not fully account. And then one day, a dozen years ago, she was at a small dinner, the host of which was Henry Hazlitt, the libertarian economist, the other guest being Ludwig von Mises, the grand master of the Austrian school of anti-statist economics. Miss Rand was going on about something or other, at which point Mises told her to be quiet, that she was being very foolish. The lady who could account for all her emotions at that point burst out into tears, and complained: "You are treating me like a poor ignorant little Jewish girl!" Mr. Hazlitt, attempting to bring serenity to his table, leaned over and said, "There there, Ayn, that isn't at all what Ludwig was suggesting." But this attempt at conciliation was ruined when Mises jumped up and said: "That iss eggsactly what you ahrr!" Since both participants were Jewish, this was not a racist slur. This story was mortal to her reputation as the lady of total self-control.

THERE WERE other unpleasantnesses of professional interest, such as her alienation from her principal apostle, Nathaniel Branden—who was so ungallant as to suggest, in retaliation against her charge that he was trying to swindle her, that the breakup was the result of his rejection of an, er, amatory advance by Miss Rand. Oh goodness, it got ugly.

There were a few who, like Chambers, caught on early. *Atlas Shrugged* was published back before the law of the Obligatory Sex Scene was passed by both Houses of Congress and all fifty state legislatures, so that the volume was considered rather risqué, in its day. Russell Kirk, challenged to account for Miss Rand's success if indeed she was merely an exiguous philosophic figure, replied, "Oh, they read her books for the fornicating bits." Unkind. And only partly true. *The Fountainhead*, read in a certain way, is a profound assertion of the integrity of art. What did Miss Rand in was her anxiety to theologize her beliefs. She was an eloquent and persuasive anti-statist, and if only she had left it at that—but no, she had to declare that God did not exist, that altruism was despicable, that only self-interest is good and noble. She risked, in fact, giving to capitalism that bad name that its enemies have done so well in giving it; and that is a pity. Miss Rand was a talented woman, devoted to her ideals. She came as a refugee from Communism to this country as a young woman, and carved out a substantial career. May she rest in peace, and may she experience the demystification of her mind possessed. □

WHO DOES SPEAK FOR HUMAN LIFE?

New York, March 12—I have always felt sorry for bishops, because their station makes it very difficult for them to speak in those polemical rhythms that are usually required in order to attract attention or to reply to criticism with psychic satisfaction. For this reason I think that when non-bishops write about bishops, non-bishops, just to be fair, should try to abide by the rules by which bishops are bound.

Now, it is not widely known that, as *Lifeletter '82*'s issue No. 2 reports, "the Human Life Bill-Hatch split has split the [anti-abortion] movement, and badly." That sentence is only one in four pages of tightly written journalism discussing the HLB-Hatch "split." This newsletter elicited from the chancery office of Superior, Wisconsin a letter denouncing it in ecclesiastical language, the kind of thing that transforms "go jump in the lake, you dumb bastard" into, "we shall need prayerfully to accept the grave burden of doing without the support of our brother-in-Christ."

But this issue isn't going to go away. We have now (I don't know who snitched them, or gave them out) the minutes of the bishops' meeting in Washington last November after which the National Council of Bishops publicly supported the Hatch Amendment. And so we learned that there was considerable anxiety expressed at that closed meeting about supporting a constitutional amendment that would do two things, 1) return to individual states their pre-1973 right to govern abortion laws, subject to 2) the overriding power of Congress to set national abortion policy. Some bishops asked Cardinal Cooke of New York, who headed the committee that came out pro-Hatch, Wouldn't this amendment, if passed, set up state shopping centers for abortion, much as everyone used to go to Nevada for quickie divorces? Not, said Cardinal Cooke, if Congress acted more restrictively than Nevada, because then there would be a federal standard. But if Congress is to be given the right to act, why not vote in favor of the HLB—the Human Life Bill—which would put Congress on record as declaring that from conception, babies inherit the rights of the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments? Because, said Cardinal Cooke, HLB is widely held to be unconstitutional. But isn't the Supreme Court's decision in *Roe* v. *Wade* also widely held to be unconstitutional? Not the same thing, really, because HLB may be something scholars would argue about, but it is a here-and-now means of testing the ability of the Supreme Court to answer plausibly questions raised by their antic behavior in 1973. Besides, although constitutional quibbling will always be with us, HLB would do something to stop the fetal slaughter, and isn't this to be preferred over punctilio-acclamation by lawyers, which you're never going to get anyway?

IT MAY embarrass my old friend and colleague (in an unrelated enterprise) James P. McFadden, but since he has been singled out by the bishops' national committee (for Hatch) it should be said that no letters from the chancery of Superior are likely to frown convincingly on the tone of *The Human Life Review*, founded by McFadden seven years ago, and the locus of civilized philosophical, legal, and polemical discussion on the abortion issue. Is it a single-issue publication? Listen (current issue—it is a quarterly) to the incomparable Joseph Sobran on "single issues":

"Abortion might be called the single issue about which you mustn't be a single-issue voter. Civil rights, Israel, foreign policy, nuclear energy, entitlement programs, whales—you can be downright obsessive about any of these, and nobody will say boo.

"The pro-abortion side hasn't been what I would call ingenuous. They specialize in footage of babies with *spina bifida* and other terrible birth defects, when in fact most women or couples who decide to abort don't wait around to find out whether the blessed non-event would have brought deformity into the family: they just want to get rid of the thing."

That is powerful stuff, and its innate moral wit and analytical power keep alive the abortion controversy. The courts, Congress, the bishops, the moralists are going to continue to have a very hard time. They should begin by subscribing to *The Human Life Review* (150 E. 35th St., New York, New York 10016). The journal has the manners of a bishop, and the tongue of H. L. Mencken, and, if you didn't know the two could fuse, it's because you have deprived yourself of familiarity with this remarkable journal. □

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Trans-O-Gram

By SVEND PETERSEN

DEFINITIONS

A. A great French monarch — 23 3 35 161 38 52 76 98 117 131 164

B. This was formerly part of the German parliament — 48 118 89 99 213 11 111 73 19

C. One of Dickens's juvenile characters — 95 15 25 46 70 149 125 32 81 90 152

D. A type of suit (sounds poetic) — 80 188 129 91

E. Unthankfulness — 92 204 172 192 195 162 5 13 37 211 54

F. An Eastern Hemisphere nation — 100 27 94 169 179 63 45

G. A motorist who wants his half in the middle — 113 30 60 180 196 135 78

H. Facsimiles made by a camera — 123 178 219 189 214 198 142 137 206 34

I. IRA MET A WOMAN (*anagram*) — 33 53 59 86 108 150 156 159 171 184 191 194

J. What cafes were once called — 85 10 96 103 14 22 163 224 197 1 43 51

K. Standards of excellence — 166 202 107 79 181 101

L. Failed, as a stage play — 36 21 182 28 67 208 168

M. What the Indians traded to the Dutch — 57 84 16 68 87 174

N. One who assists at a theatrical production — 66 49 116 119 170 207 145 93 217

O. A building entrance — 7 112 120 127 141 147 193 155 167

P. A state of West Germany — 157 2 134 139 154 183 212 17 42 136 177 210 220 12 20 50 151

Q. An American Revolutionary War general — 160 58 158 215 102 225 31 65 203 128 18 47

R. A former professional football player — 201 185 165 216 146 153

S. A type of stroke used on stringed instruments — 205 109 104 61 199 121 133

T. In the wings (theatrical) — 209 110 144 88 56 200 132 173

U. A German novelist (1875-1955) — 221 176 140 4 44 72 9 143 74 82

V. Confident — 126 105 69 83 97 122 29

W. A type of cosmetic — 148 62 114 124 190 77 6 26 175

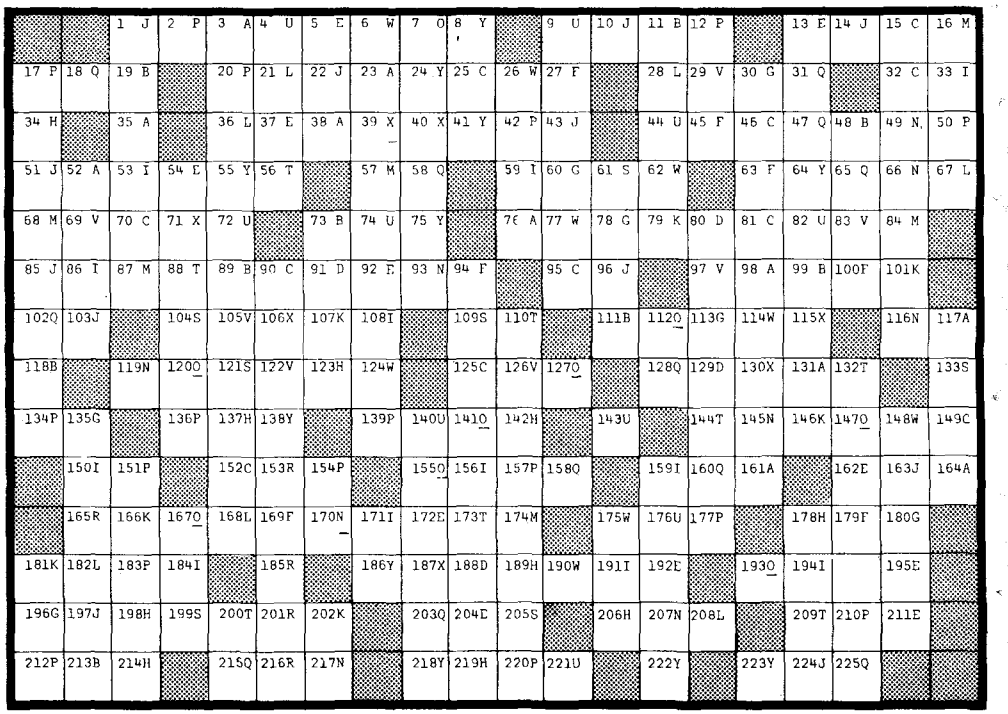
X. One who creases — 187 130 106 40 39 115 71

Y. Used a certain method to clean a building — 223 41 55 75 186 218 222 8 24 64 138

DIRECTIONS

The object of TRANS-O-GRAM is to fill out the puzzle diagram by guessing the words (above) from their DEFINITIONS, and transferring each letter of the guessed word to the correspondingly numbered square in the diagram. When the diagram is filled out it will spell out a quotation from some published work (reading normally from left to right, black boxes indicating the ends of words); also, when the WORDS have all been filled in above, their initial letters will spell out the author and title of the quoted work. The acrostic feature, and the relative word-lengths in the diagram, will assist in the solution. Spelling and definitions on the authority of *Webster's New International Dictionary*, Second Edition.

See page 376 for solution to last Trans-O-Gram.



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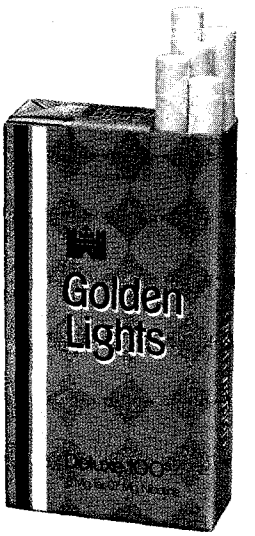

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